CINEMA QUARTERLY

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THE SPECTATOR

FILM TERMINOLOGY

THE LOOSE use of loose terms is characteristic of an art not yet hampered with academics. But an attempt must be made some time, and the sooner the better, to rationalise the phraseology of cinema—its technical terms, the names of its species, and the definition of its functions. Some of the soundest writers on the film are unintelligible to the ordinary reader because of the jargon they use. Conservative Sunday newspapers and staid reviews, where even colloquialism is frowned upon, bewilder the reader accustomed to plain English when he comes to the cinema feature. Nor are our own pages exempt. Every writer has his own terminology, and it frequently happens that one exponent will use the same word as another when in fact he means something entirely different.

"Documentary" is perhaps the most abused word of all. It is used variously and mistakenly for educational, cultural (if anyone knows even what that means), propagandist, travelogue, interest, industrial, descriptive, and even advertising (*x* shillings a foot, go anywhere, shoot anything).

The word might have come to mean any of these things, though it could never mean them all. But it belongs properly to the genre to which it was first attached. And it is the association of the word with this genre that has given it the prestige which other users so much covet. Documentary proper is an art form as distinct as verse from prose and should no more be confused with the lecture film, the screen magazine, or *Secrets of Nature* than they are with studio dramatics. Perhaps the best definition of documentary is that once given by John Grierson in these pages: the creative treatment of actuality. Documentary does not merely describe, it interprets—using the living scene and the living story as opposed to the artificial scene and the acted story. Had this confusion in terms not arisen we might indeed have been spared the arty photography and pseudo-symphonic structure which have ruined so many educational and descriptive films.

THE PICTURE'S THE THING

APART FROM such elementals the trouble in coining a word, as in creating a technique, in films, is that it may so soon become obsolete.

The cinema should be the last home of dogmatism. Is not tele-

vision ready to be put on the market at the opportune moment? When the electric camera arrives what will happen to montage? And what of colour? And stereoscopy? The theorist in cinema has little time to gain a foothold before some new development sends his dogmas hurtling into the abyss of the forever-discarded. The film does not develop as painting, music, or literature have developed. It changes. It is dependent on the scientist and the engineer for its very existence. Its tools do not evolve in a gradual process of improvement. They are liable to be replaced with disturbing suddenness, requiring a complete re-orientation of ideas and the learning of an entirely new technique. Yet did not Homer exist before the printed word? And is not fine poetry still hammered out on the modern typewriter? The poet uses words to convey ideas; the film-maker uses images. No matter how much the mechanical production of pictures changes, cinema, if it continues at all, must still mean visual expression. Whatever its size or its frame or its colour the picture will remain the thing.

LITERATURE AND THE FILM

WE HAVE long complained of the influence of literature and the stage on the film. It was refreshing therefore to come across, in a little book of critical essays called "Gog Magog" (London: Dent, 7s. 6d.), a brief consideration of the influence of the film on literature and the drama. G. W. Stonier, the author of this modest "anatomy of modernism," points out how playwrights and novelists have tried deliberate imitation. "Street Scene," "Grand Hotel,"" Stamboul Train," "42nd Parallel," are all undisguised efforts at cinema technique. The stage, in attempted retaliation perhaps, has its revolving platforms, and, as in "Hatter's Castle," its divided proscenium. Then there is the literary close-up, which Stonier finds in the writings of James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, Dos Passos, and many other contemporary authors, when the distance between the reader and each of the characters in the novel is liable to shift. Writers, he says, now have a greater sense of *visual* property. This is not a new realisation, however, for the aim of writing has always been to convey images by means of words; but the cinema has brought this home afresh. Imagism and impressionism have both received new stimulus from the film, though how far the influence has been direct it would be difficult to estimate. And had the anatomist also examined painting and photography he would have found the influence of the cinema apparent in new angles of approach and in the revelation of the hidden beauty in the commonplace.

All of which goes to prove that, after all, we cannot take our

cinema too seriously. In any case, did not H. G. Wells say years ago that on the screen "a more subtle fabric of suggestion, a completer beauty and power, might be possible than any of our tried and trusted equipment could achieve"?

WORDS AND MUSIC

So FAR the film may have had little influence on the development of contemporary music, but the ideas Alfred Hitchcock discusses in this issue of *Cinema Quarterly* may ultimately have far-reaching effects. For some time the virtue of the spoken word has been in doubt. The hundred-per-cent. talkie is no more, and even Hollywood is beginning to use words selectively and even impressionistically, instead of in the name of realism. Hitchcock did this in his first talkie in the early days, and if his ideas on music when put into practice create a like sensation, there is no saying what may happen. Whether music and film are made to march in the same rhythm, or whether speech, sound, and image are used to build up an orchestrated unity, the music must be specially composed, and it is likely that the musical director of a film will soon be of primary, if not of paramount, importance.

May all the gods forbid the filming of classical opera. A sixteen-stone Romeo trying to embrace a voluminous Juliet is bad enough on the stage—spare us the close-up! There is, however, enormous possibility in the development of true cine-opera as an entirely new medium, conceived as a whole and executed in unity of sound and image. This is an exciting subject to which we hope to return later.

Meanwhile, who would not give all the mighty Wurlitzers to have Fischinger's musical abstracts established as the *entr'acte*?

SUB-STANDARD PRODUCTION

Correspondents continually ask how to gain practical experience in film-making when opportunities of entering the studios are so slight. The obvious and soundest reply is: Buy a sub-standard camera or join a group engaged in sub-standard production. Learn to handle film, to know the smell and the feel of celluloid: get hold of a pair of scissors, and cut and splice, cut and splice till you can make the frames march in rhythm. No amount of theory is of value unless backed by practice of this sort. Get it at any price.

NORMAN WILSON.

THE FUNCTION OF THE DIRECTOR

1. THE DOCUMENTARY DIRECTOR

PAUL ROTHA

A DIRECTOR goes documentary by choice and not coincidence. In so doing he seeks to serve his conscience and avoid the cupidity of story-film as it flourishes under most studio conditions.

Documentary defines not subject or style, but approach.

It denies neither trained actors nor the advantages of staging. It justifies the use of every known technical artifice to gain its effect on the specator.

Two courses are open to the director of documentary. He may seek themes and material at the ends of the earth in the manner of a Flaherty; or he may face the problems of the community around him in the manner of a Grierson. The choice is personal. These two names plot the extremities of the dramatised documentary as distinct from the descriptive style favoured by the lesser lights of the racket.

To the documentary director the appearance of things and people is only superficial. It is the meaning behind the thing and the significance underlying the person that occupy his attention. To the documentary approach every manufacture, every organisation, every industry, every craft represents at one point or another the fulfilment of a human interest.

Documentary approach to cinema differs from that of story-film not in its disregard for craftsmanship, but in the purpose to which that craftsmanship is put. Documentary is a trade just as carpentry or pot-making. As a trade its technique must be mastered if the product is to be valuable and have meaning. But technique alone is not sufficient.

A film must serve a purpose beyond itself if it is to survive. It may serve entertainment (as the studio producers dictate), it may serve propaganda (as the publicists demand), or it may serve art (as the highbrows pretend), but it cannot be an end in itself.

Because documentary is in its infancy and because production is largely (but not wholly) made possible by serving propagandist ends, the publicist himself is the main enemy of the director. Because cinema is everyone's plaything to criticise for good or bad, your publicist will demand the inclusion of this or the exclusion of that to the prostitution of your conscience.

Therefore, three demands must be made by the documentary director: the right to theorise, the right to experiment (time and footage), and the right to attempt to satisfy his conscience. He may have to travel to sacrificial lengths to obtain these rights. Because he must look to the future he will try to satisfy the publicist's demands, perhaps produce a bad film thereby, and get kicked in the pants just the same. It is at present a matter of compromise, of bluff as bluff can. If he is ambitious he will hope to get away with a number of second-rate films, goaded on by the belief that one day he will turn out a top-notcher.

The documentary director must remember that his theme (or message) alone compels audience interest. There is nothing personal in a documentary with which an audience can identify itself. Perhaps there are mass or social instincts, but not individual emotions. But in story-film the audience can assume a personal interest in characters or incidents, often projecting itself into the position of a participant. Because there is a story to divert attention from realities, the task of making story-film is more simple than that of documentary. In fact, the audience will accept deliberate misstatements of truth in story-film, but to lie in documentary demands infinite skill, perfect craftsmanship and an accurate knowledge of audience psychology.

Unlike the story-film director, the maker of documentary has yet to gain the full co-operation of the trade. The renter and the exhibitor do not understand documentary, and I am not sure that they have tried. They search for established publicity angles and, finding none, invent them. Yet their habits are retrogressive. *Moana* was issued as "the Love of a South Sea Siren." Documentary must always go forward. It needs new distributions and new publicities. These will come.

Meanwhile, production becomes specialised, demanding mentalities capable of approaching a multitude of treatments, from the school-film to the dramatic industrial.

But, if it is not to go the way of story-film, documentary must be protected against exploitation for commercial profit alone. Its directors must retain freedom for their ideals.

ANOTHER REPERTORY CINEMA

THE FAMOUS Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, has been re-opened with a programme of repertory. J. S. Fairfax-Jones, one of our London correspondents and a prominent member of the film societies' movement, is a director of this new venture. Among the first films to be shown are *Le Million*, *Tabu*, and *Cimarron*.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

on

MUSIC IN FILMS

In an Interview with

STEPHEN WATTS

WHEN THE British student of intelligent cinema turns to survey the creative side of film-making in his own country the names available for reference are pathetically few. Even ranging over the whole of the talkie's short history he can probably produce a bare half-dozen, say (alphabetically for safety!) Asquith, Dupont, Grierson, Hitchcock, Korda, and Saville, and only the two last-named of these can be regarded, at the moment, as contributors to the ordinary cinema.

But the arrival of *Waltzes from Vienna* and the news that he has joined the Gaumont-British organization bring back to prominence the name of Alfred Hitchcock.

His return to active direction is almost accidental. After his term as production supervisor at British International—a regrettable, fallow period for the keen intelligence which gave us *Blackmail* and *Murder*—and his signing a contract for Korda, he was approached by Tom Arnold, the theatrical manager, to supervise the filming of *Waltzes from Vienna*. The step from that to actually directing it was taken because the subject interested Hitchcock so much.

It sounds strange that the most unremittingly cinematic of our directors, the realist and humanist, Hitchcock, should undertake what seemed like simply the rendering into celluloid of a stage musical success.

The clue is in that word "musical". He saw here a chance to do two things: to try out some of his ideas about the relation of music to the film, and try to prove that a film that *is* a film can be created out of a ready-made theatre subject.

It was of these beliefs and theories about music and the film that Hitchcock talked to me, illustrating his points with instances from the film he was then busily engaged on cutting.

"The arrival of talkies, as you know, temporarily killed action in pictures," he began, "but it did just as much damage to music.

Producers and directors were obsessed by words. They forgot that one of the greatest emotional factors in the silent cinema was the musical accompaniment. They have gradually realized that action should still come first—that, talkies or not, they are still making motion pictures. But music as an artistic asset of the film is still sadly neglected.

"I was greatly interested in music and films in the silent days and I have always believed that the coming of sound opened up a great new opportunity. The accompanying music came at last entirely under the control of the people who made the picture. That was surely an advance on having a separate score played by cinema orchestras. The tremendous advantage of a film being musically accompanied had been demonstrated by 'silents' like *Ben Hur* and *Way Down East*. Yet when it became possible to blend film and music together in an artistic entity the opportunity was overlooked, or at least left undeveloped.

"The result is that the only dramatic use of music in talkies—leaving out of account the 'musicals' which interpolate 'numbers' rather than employ music—is the crude instance of slow music for love scenes. Anything else has been an odd stunt and not a properly worked out scheme.

"But that conventional soft music is the basis of the right idea—expressing the mood of the scene. It is an elementary application of it."

"Do you believe, then, that every film should have a complete musical score before it goes into production?" I asked.

"I do," Hitchcock replied emphatically. "Though by 'complete' I do not mean continuous. That would be monotonous. Silence is often very effective and its effect is heightened by the proper handling of the music before and after.

"There is, somewhere, the correct musical accompaniment for almost any scene—music which will improve the scene. But none at all is better than the wrong music."

"But how would you relate music and action? What would you say was the underlying purpose of all film-music? Can you give me an example?" I asked.

"Well, the first and obvious use is atmospheric. To create excitement. To heighten tensity. In a scene of action, for instance, when the aim is to build up to a physical climax, music adds excitement just as effectively as cutting—but I shall have more to say about that comparison later. Music can also be a background to a scene in any mood and a commentary on dialogue, but, frankly, I have not yet made up my mind about the function of music in relation to dialogue in general. I can only give specific instances where I think it might be profitably used."

"Surely the trouble there," I suggested, "is that an audience cannot listen to and appreciate both words and the musical background at the same time?"

"Partly that. But not entirely. I might argue that I do not want the audience to listen consciously to the music at all. It might be achieving its desired effect without thé audience being aware of how that effect was being achieved.

"No. The problem goes deeper than that. Music with certain types of dialogue might be made to achieve a great deal, and here I can give you an apt illustration from *Waltzes from Vienna.*

"There is a dialogue scene between a young man and a woman. It is a quiet, tender scene. But the woman's husband is on his way. The obvious way to get suspense is to cut every now and then to glimpses of the husband travelling towards the house. In the silent days, when the villain was coming, you always had the orchestra playing quickening music. You *felt* the menace. Well, you can still have that and keep the sense of the talk-scene going as well. And the result is that you don't need to insist pictorially on the husband's approach.

"I think I used about six feet of film out of the three hundred feet used in the sequence to flash to the husband. The feeling of approaching climax can be suggested by the music.

"It is in that psychological use of music, which, you will observe, they knew something about before talkies, that the great possibilities lie.

"It makes it possible to express the unspoken. For instance, two people may be saying one thing and thinking something very different. Their looks match their words, not their thoughts. They may be talking politely and quietly, but there may be a storm coming. You cannot express the mood of that situation by word and photograph. But I think you could get at the underlying idea with the right background music. It may sound far-fetched to compare a dramatic talkie with opera, but there is something in common. In opera quite frequently the music echoes the words that have just been spoken. That is one way music with dialogue can be used.

"*Waltzes from Vienna* gave me many opportunities for working out ideas in the relation of film and music. Naturally every cut in the film was worked out on script before shooting began. But more than that, the musical cuts were worked out too.

"Let me give you an example. As you probably know, *Waltzes from Vienna* tells the story of the conception, composition, and first performance of "The Blue Danube." Obviously there has to be a long musical sequence when the piece is first played in public—one of the big scenes of the picture. In what I have been saying about music in films I have supposed the action to be the inspiration of

the music. But in this case the music had to inspire the action. All the camera has to work with is the orchestra, the conductor, and the audience. The human angle is the conductor—the younger Strauss—and the people of the story who are listening. So I arranged the cutting to match the rhythm of the music. It is difficult to describe in words. You must visualize the film moving in time with the music. In the slow passages the cutting is slow, when the music quickens the mood of the melody is followed by the quick cutting.

"Then, again, there is a good instance of the sort of thing I have aimed at in the scene when Strauss, a young baker, conceives the tune while at work. There the action—composed of simple things like bakers kneading dough and rolls falling into baskets—moves in time with the music which is forming in the young man's brain.

"Film music and cutting have a great deal in common. The purpose of both is to create the *tempo* and mood of the scene. And, just as the ideal cutting is the kind you don't notice *as* cutting, so with music."

"You think then that cutting, montage, or whatever you like to call it, cannot do all that is required to establish the mood of a film, Mr. Hitchcock?"

"Exactly. I think cutting has definite limitations. Its best use is in violent subjects. That is why the Russians made such effective use of it, because they were dealing with violence, and they could pile shock on shock by means of cutting. But have you noticed that since they started to make quieter subjects, concerned with agriculture, etc., their montage has not been so noticeable or effective? If I am sitting here with you discussing the Five-Year-Plan, no amount of cutting can make a film of us dramatic because the scene is not dramatic. You cannot achieve quiet, restrained effects that way. But you might express the mood and tone of our conversation with music that would illuminate or even subtly comment on it.

"Please make it clear that I am not laying down laws on this subject. I am simply experimenting in theory as I have done in practice in *Waltzes from Vienna*. There are lots of things I have not made up my mind about. But I do think that any intelligent attempt to harness music to films is a step forward. Words and incidental noises and 'song numbers' are surely not all the sound track was invented for.

"The basis of the cinema's appeal is emotional. Music's appeal is to a great extent emotional, too. To neglect music, I think, is to surrender, wilfully or not, a chance of progress in film-making."

FILM AND RADIO

RUDOLF ARNHEIM

Author of "Film"

THE last century seems to have produced an inflation of new branches of art. We are used to the idea that art is of the same venerable age as mankind. The beginnings of the dance, music, poetry, theatre and arts are veiled in the mist of a far-distant past. But glance at the last century. In 1830, photography was created; in 1920, radio; in 1930, sound-film. Are these all new arts?

If one examines the technique with which these new branches of art take effect, one discovers that, in spite of all the diversity of the technical apparatus and results, there is a surprising uniformity. One feels tempted to speak of subdivisions in an entirely new branch of art, which might be called *reproductive art*. This new art is not fundamentally different from other branches of art. There is a difference between the harmony of colours and the harmony of music; so is there a difference between the expressions of reproductive art and those of all other branches of art.

What is characteristic in reproductive art? It is the reproduction of reality. It is like the model taking the painter's brush, when the rays of light make impressions of light and dark; when the sound waves draw their lines on a waxen plate or on a strip of film. We know that this is not merely a process of mechanical reproduction comparable to a technical process such as printing, which has nothing to do with the creative activity of an artistic human mind.

Reproductive art requires creative genius. The fact that reality can copy itself is only a hint to us that we should search for the characteristics of the new art; its strength lies in the fact that it does copy, especially from a *selected point of observation* and with a *selected choice of subjects*. Camera and microphone permit us to retain the perceptions of our most important senses through the eye and the ear; and to transmit these perceptions through space and time. Photography and silent film leave out the auditory element. Radio and gramophone leave out the visual element. Sound-film combines both factors. Visual perception is far more complete and true to nature than auditory perception and, in consequence, the visual branches of reproductive art (photography and film) are closer to reality than the auditory branches, which command only part of the senses and are therefore limited in their means, at least as far as they try to express the position of sound in space and time. This

limitation in extensity is, however, fully compensated by richness in intensity. The spoken word may be exploited in many unique ways and, further, the art of conveying sound reaches its best expression in abstract and symbolic characters. Visual reproduction is not only more true to nature, it is more tied to it (Chaplin's art being an exception). Radio plays, on the contrary, can be so full of philosophical visions that they could not be satisfactorily produced on the stage (such as Goethe's "Faust," which, with all its symbolic characters, is more a radio play than a stage drama). The mechanical reproductions of visual and auditory perceptions thus lead to diverse results in film and radio, even though they have in common many important principles of form.

It was an exciting event when the discovery was made how to copy naturally visual and auditory perceptions with newly invented apparatus. That is the reason why we find in the early stages of each subdivision of reproductive art only one aspiration: to copy nature. They have, then, nothing to do with art. Gradually in the hands of artists who feel the possibilities of the new medium, the factors by which reproduction may become an art come into the foreground.

At first we are satisfied with a normal position which helps us to copy visual and auditory perceptions as accurately as possible The camera is placed in the position which enables the object to be most clearly reproduced. The singer is placed before the microphone so that his voice will be neither too loud nor too soft—that the balance will be natural. In the next stage an attempt is made to vary the distance from the apparatus so as to create through the characteristic space between the object and the apparatus a personal relationship between the actor and the audience—the intimacy, for instance, of the close-up, the remoteness and softness of distance. The object is shown not only by itself, but also perspectively with its world, and relatively with its surroundings, and its fellows. All the objects which appear at the same time and place are each selected so that symbolic and universal relations will be created. Objects may be placed in characteristic settings and lighting, just as sounds and dialogue may be produced in radio and film studios by varying means, such as non-echoing rooms and muffled resounding of highly reflective walls. There was, at first, nothing but a quite ordinary sound-studio.

In the same way we find in the early stages of film and radio the uninterrupted passage of time, keeping to the principle: Unity of Time. The *Zäsur* only indicates, as on the stage, the end of a long-drawn-out scene. Then we realize that, at the film cutting-bench and before the microphone, a change of scene is made more easily than on the stage. Certain scenes are cut to a minimum.

Some are flashed for only a second (for instance, by Josef von Sternberg), and gradually the structure of time and space in the simple scene is interfered with by fitting in other scenes which happen at different places at the same time. Shots of the same place are taken from different angles by now. The unity of the plot becomes a mosaic of details.

Up to the present artistic adjustments have not been satisfactorily made in radio. It is not possible in radio to reproduce from different angles, but only from varying distances. But the primary reason is that radio has not yet made practical use of recording radio plays on a sound-track which could be cut and edited. As long as the actors continue to crowd round the microphone during broadcasting for scene changes, radio will not pass out of its first stages.

Film and photography have already reached a high standard, and, after exaggerated attempts to use the new effects, there follows a period of modification and simplification of the devices which produce the deepest impression on the audience. Radio, the youngest offspring of this new family of art, has not yet passed the initial stage, and is still treated, as were film and photography in their early stage of development, as a mere instrument of reproduction. Its artistic possibilities are still denied by many people, and little is being done to disprove their contentions. But the parallel of radio and film strengthens the hope that broadcasting will progress in the same way. So far as reproduction of reality is concerned, it will never reach the standard of richness and originality of the visual art. There is, however, every reason to hope that it will still become culturally significant.

TRANSLATED BY MARGRET KAPPELS.

ELSIE COHEN AND THE ACADEMY

THE ACADEMY Cinema, Oxford Street, which for the past three years has pioneered the Continental film movement in London, announces the resignation of Eric Hakim as managing director. Miss Elsie Cohen, who originated the international scheme at the Academy, which has become so widely known under her organisation, will continue under her own direction to present the most outstanding Continental films. Among those to be shown during the present season are *Anna and Elisabeth*, with Herta Thiele and Dorothea Wieck; *Prenez Garde à la Peinture*, adapted from "The Late Christopher Bean;" a new Lotte Reiniger silhouette film; and the first presentation to the British public of the cartoon films of the Hungarian artist, Szegedi Züts, who is now working in London.

SYNTHETIC AMERICA

ERIC M. KNIGHT

Film Critic of "The Philadelphia Public Ledger"

As I sit in one of our American movie palaces, with the *de luxe* plush seats providing some minor balm, and watch the latest enamelled epic of American life and times float past in superficial perfection, I often wonder what the rest of the world is going to think of that picture. I wonder: "Do the girls in West Ham think we are like that? Do the lads in Lancashire imagine they are seeing us? Will Bordeaux and Mantua and Bombay and Melbourne come to the conclusion that America is as Hollywood shows it?"

It is almost with a shock that I realize that, of course, they must accept us as we show ourselves by now; the steady output of years must have convinced the world that the United States is much as it is shown on the films. Horrible thought! I rush to advise you that it isn't true—any more than the old conceptions about Frenchmen with pointed moustaches and high hats, Russians with beards and blouses, and Mexicans with knives and sneers.

May I point out that few lands know how to tell the truth about themselves. To reverse the medallion, let me announce that British films have failed, with monotonous regularity, to tell the rest of the world the truth about Britain. We've had, true enough, talking photographs of lots of your actors—who, I suppose, are the exact equivalent of our Broadway lads. What picture of Britain do they bring us? They, those actors, appear to us like a lot of top-hatted silly asses of exactly the type that Americans delight to scorn.

Have you ever sent us a picture that would allow an American to see a bit of Britain as you yourselves know it? Possibly Grierson's *Drifters* did; we have not seen that here. There was an Anthony Asquith short film which, for a brief moment, caught up some of the colour of a mist-draped moor. Beyond that, nothing! An American would need to visit Britain to find that it is not a country of pseudo-modernistic sets that look remarkably like our own just-as-shiny plasterwork from Hollywood.

Similarly, I should say that of all the great outpouring of American cinedramas not one in a hundred bears any grain of truth in its warped outlook. You see only cardboard conventions distorted with grease-paint outlooks; crooked cops, blatant gunmolls, senti-

mental detectives, face-slapping tough guys, saccharine-sentimented vaudeville heroes, wise-cracking gold-diggers, impudent youth, gorgeously gowned shopgirls. That, my friends, is not America.

Art is a parallel to truth, and there is much truth in the United States, truth that needs telling. For it is not monotonous, this live America you never see. It is alive, vivid and interesting. Moreover, this being a large country, it is variegated in its colour.

We have here the rolling valleys of the East, with the country people who ride and hunt much as in your own counties; we have the granite-strewn farms and hard accents of stern New England; the narrow monotony of the "Baptist belt" of the near Middle West; the South, where dedacence and newly awakened life battle bitterly; the awesome flat lands and flat life of the wheat-belt; the semi-tropical vegetation and the hothouse ideas of California; the grime of Pennsylvania coal-fields, with bloody conflicts between miners and bosses; the tragic bleakness of manufacturing cities; the pure architecture of little old towns; the Creole overlay of New Orleans—I could go on for pages.

These, all widely variant, are the real America you do not see in American films—much to the despair of the sane and normal citizens of this land, who have deep and generous affection for their country.

There is not a phase of the "programme" film that manages to clutch at truth beyond that wise-crackery of the Broadway hanger-on which must, to you, seem typical American stuff. Even the music, such as it is, has no American quality to it—and by American I mean inherently belonging to this land. There is much jazz (which doesn't get into screen musicomedy), which is negroid. But the music you get in Hollywood films is almost purely Russian-Jewish. Meet our Berlins and Jolsons and Cantors and then you see it all—you know why—the minor wail, the crying blue, the "Mammy" caterwauling that springs from Jewish matriarch-worship. American songs really American? Not any more than a cantor's chanting is British. If you want real American songs we have them by the dozen. There is "Oh Suzannah," "Arkansas Traveller," "Money Musk," "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," "The Old Rock Candy Mountain," "Clementine." Dozens of native tunes that are part of the nation's life are unused.

In practically every part of the United States I have heard a song which starts:

My son Joshua, went to Philadelphia.

It is as well known, I should say, as "The Star-Spangled Banner." Yet it lies unrecorded. Or there is the plaintive charm of the real cowboy songs, such as "The Last Roundup," with its curiously intricate rhythm and its exhortation to:

Git along, little dogies, git along.

Dogies, I explain, lest a watchful proof-reader turn it to "doggies," are young cattle.

The tunes, songs, accents, speech, habits, dress, life and customs of the greatest part of America lie untouched, unreflected, by Hollywood. Why? Possibly because the screen is not the stage; the critical camera-eye won't allow the making-up of grease-paint actors into these rôles as the stage might. You must go out into the lands and film the people themselves. And Hollywood is much too occupied with production schedules ever to go farther away from Hollywood than a suburban location. Catalina Island for sea-shots is the farthest north in exploration for American films—and if this ignores completely the fisher-folk of Nova Scotia and Boston, or the oystermen of Connecticut and Long Island, no one knows except a few people who live in those latter places.

Of course, production of real pictures would take stamina and fortitude, and lots of it. We haven't got brave producers. We haven't a producer here who would dare to give the world a picture of the negro as anything but a musical-comedy figure of trite jollity. Who will film the tragedy of the American negro? No one—for not even our *Emperor Jones* just filmed independently is aught but a stage-drama with a celluloid coating.

The only film, as a type, that has any real authority is our much-scorned Western. At least there, if you have banality of plot, you have some of the stone and gravel and grassland of America thrown in as incidentals. But, remember, this is only a small portion of the United States, the cowboy West. Millions of Americans have never seen it—it is as far away from the millhands of Brockton, Massachusetts, and Connecticut as it is from the shipyard workers of the Tyneside. And it is dying so fast that it will be one with the rock in another decade.

Apart from Westerns, what films have been really American? Some of the "historicals," such as *The Covered Wagon* and *Cimarron*, have recreated the past. And what attraction there was in resuscitating a truth that was!

I am a Fugitive was a real film—if a bad one for export. It was an internal matter—an intramural attack on one of the flagrant injustices that flourish in this land. (The ignorance and cruelty of decadent whites in Georgia had long been attacked by newspapers of courage, such as the late "New York World.") The film was an odd affair for Hollywood to tackle and it raised polite Hades. I'm glad Britishers saw that; for even if it showed an ugly bit of American life, it showed, too, that there lives here the courage and desire to exterminate it. The Governor of Georgia was quite upset about it all.

What other film rang true? I suggest another: *State Fair*. Despite all the fake backgrounds, dunning shots and duped scenes concocted in Hollywood, this one almost caught the narrowness of Middle Western life. The live-stock contests, the canning awards, the tawdry amusement booths, the trotting-horse races, were getting close to the soil. If the picture wanted to get even closer it should have included those curious and distinctly American contests of hawg-calling and rolling-pin throwing. The first of those is won by the person whose dulcet yowls can call home a herd of hogs from the greatest distance; the second, open only to women, is judged more for accuracy than for mileage. Silly stuff? Outlandish, I admit. But that's what the people do, and I can't see that it's any sillier than rating the dexterity with which a man can beat rhythms with the tips of his shoes—or sing about his mammy as he kneels on one knee.

There is one more picture that is American and alive: the recently issued *She Done Him Wrong*, by Mae West, for Mae West and with Mae West. I wonder how I can explain her. I suppose the easiest way is to say that East is East and West is something else again.

Mae West has swept across the country. Will Hays ruled that she couldn't make a film called *Diamond Lil*, so she made a film in which she was Diamond Lou and issued it as a rose by another name. (Thus we obey Hays.)

But it isn't the story that means anything. It is Mae West herself: beautiful, vulgar, plump and earthy. She has poundage and charm and a worldly-wise air. But it is her frank vulgarity that attracts. The very walk of her, the lift of a shoulder, are eloquently suggestive. And is this America? In part it is. At least, it is closer to the truth. So America goes wild over the woman. She upsets the silly cardboard convention that a woman is something with a Hollywood diet and a lamp-post silhouette. For once, instead of a mannikin, there is a real woman on the screen, as real as Marie Dressler and half her age. It is astounding—someone alive on the screen!

Mae West is not all America. She is a part, but a real part. We need the other parts revealed as eloquently—the millhand and miner and automobile-worker and farmer and oil-driller and cotton-cropper.

We are not a land of vaudeville actors, and it is only because vaudeville actors play so much a part of Hollywood life that Hollywood thinks they are life itself. There is a great America here—an America which, strange as it may seem to film watchers, is warm and alive, full of people whose feet are planted deeply in this land of ours. I'd like you to see them. But you won't. Not from feature films. If you want to see America, take it from the news-reels.

SCREEN MAGAZINES

D. F. TAYLOR

It is impossible to define Public Opinion or know "what the public wants," though we do know to-day that there is a growing audience who want to know, an audience who demand more in their relaxation than just entertainment. Financial crises and world economic collapses beset us, and affect us individually. Far from seeking an opiate, there is a large body of people who want to know more about this crazy, chaotic world.

The people cry for knowledge, and the producers give us entertainment. Traditionally they answer, "We know what the public wants; we don't want none of these 'ere *intellectuals*"—the stock answer that has met every innovation.

Through the screen magazine, the thin end of the wedge of knowledge could be given to the waiting audiences. To-day it is the lowest type of film produced. In form it owes much to "Tit-Bits" and "Answers," a speedy collection of odds and ends from here and there, designed to pass ten minutes and then to be forgotten. Its constant seeking after the odd and the curious satisfies the unintelligent lust for curiosity, but achieves nothing.

The present chief operators in the field are *Pathé Gazette* and *Eve's Film Review*, the *Ideal Cinemagazine*, and the *Paramount Pictorial*, with the *réchauffé* of five-year-old newsreel, the *Kinograph Tonereel*. Searching crazily for the strange and the curious, they overlook the solid jobs of review waiting on their own doorsteps. Their formula never changes. Week in and week out we are treated to a dash of industry, a dash of beauteous country-side, two dashes of fashion and a lacing of cabaret to give the reel a kick. I was once told that the North demands the cabaret. This particular statement that certain areas demand a low form of entertainment should have been debunked by now. It is not what the public want in those areas; it is what the exhibitor wants—an entirely different affair. It is an insult to the North to suggest that they demand legs and lingerie above all else. The theory that the exhibitor knows what the public wants should have been exploded before. From conversations up and down the country with exhibitors I have never yet found one who could give a true estimate of the public taste in his district. He is usually far more concerned with the mess the audience makes on his carpets than the type of film he shows. He is more concerned with the pea-nut audience on Thursday and the orange-peel audience on Saturday to think about their reactions.

Pathé, once an old and respected name in the film business, is still content to trade on that respect. It certainly cannot hope to sell its product on any other grounds. If you ever have the misfortune to sit through one with a *Paramount Screen Souvenirs* in the same programme, you will see that the technique of 1910 lives on. Half their material comes from America—cheap oddments and throw-outs of the newsreels, and apparently a fourth-hand "dupe." *Pathé's* home shooting never conceives anything beyond a long shot and a close-up; in fact it is doubtful whether the word "cutting" has filtered through to that gloomy stone house in Wardour Street. If you wish to put your soul through fifteen minutes of purgatory, see the latest issue—a music-hall turn, shot against stage props, with only two close-ups to vary the monotony of a long shot, the turn doing gags which are green with age on the halls. American children go into the air to learn geography; a good subject if properly treated, but here mauled about for the commentator to make facetious "cracks." Herman Darewski teaching us a new game for Christmas parties. There were some other items, but their nonentity escaped my notice. That is Wardour Street's idea of food for your mental pabulum.

It is difficult to decide whether Paramount take their magazine, *Paramount Pictorial*, seriously. I am inclined to the belief that it is just one of those things which happen in a big company. Sporadically someone tries to do something with it, and occasionally there is a good subject. But inevitably we get the formula: fashions, travel, cabaret, oddities—the rot runs deep when Paramount have so little originality.

Out of the muck and rut of "dupe" and unintelligence the work of Andrew Buchanan shines like a beacon light. Within his formulated limits he persistently turns out first-rate technical jobs. Every week the *Ideal Cinemagazine* is fresh and contains something stimulating. Buchanan cannot be judged on content value, though he has done everything possible within the limits of the magazine. He has one of the few cutting senses in England. The only charge that can be brought against him is a leaning to sophistication; his reel smacks too much of the purlieus of Bond Street. He pursues the odd and the curious with an energy that could be better applied. Occasionally he slips in an item which is of real value. Some of his documentary items approximate to the ultimate form of the magazine. He tried to make a revolution once when he took over the *Gaumont Mirror*, which in the old days ran *Pathé Gazette* pretty close. He tried to create a serious magazine containing documentary, talks, science, art, without the cement of a punning commentary. Unfortunately this one ray of hope in the field was scotched after a few weeks, just as it was beginning to formulate itself and stand on its feet.

Buchanan's facetious commentaries have become a byword, pandering to the old idea that your material, because it is not story, can have no interest unless it is made into entertainment by the addition of comic titles or commentary.

And that is the fundamental root trouble that applies to all shorts—documentary, newsreels, magazines, travelogues, sport-lights. They must be entertainment, and by entertainment our movie magnates would have you understand emotional appeal. They deny anyone the right to think, they deny us the right to intellectual entertainment.

Yet, through the magazine, we have an aid to the creation of a socially conscious cinema. It has a journalistic format, and as such it is of value. We want to elevate it from the ranks of "Tit-Bits"; we want to make it a weekly review of the world—something that is not cheap like "Tit-Bits," nor highbrow like the "Week-End Review." It should become a review with a definite status, a newspaper make-up, a political policy. And if so, how can it become socially useful?

It should maintain a close liaison with the newsreels. It could reconstruct from the newsreel, with added material, the motivation of political events; it would cover current social problems—slums, unemployment, world exchanges, unbalanced production. Industry would not be important for the curious things that are made in its factories, but for its developments. The wheels of industry begin to turn again—giant new machines to relieve manual labour; how the machine is replacing the hand in modern industry is of far more importance than the making of a violin, or the building of a piano. New inventions and the developments of science are far more interesting than the peculiar behaviour of certain substances under experiment. There is an interesting possibility in visual reviews of films and plays. New theories of education can be more vividly interesting than child prodigies. Fashions only become of importance in their social aspects: show the housewife how to make a dress for five bob—don't let's hob-nob with Mayfair. New social services, postal developments, new aspects of safety first, analytical reviews of sport—these are all possible subjects. Why not special regional items, new methods of agriculture and the discoveries of research for the farming areas, indications of useful leisure employments for the industrial areas?

According to formula and rigid preconceived ideas the above suggestions are not entertainment, but ask yourself what you understand by the word "entertainment." It has unfortunate associations: we need a recasting of meaning.

COMMERCIAL DOCUMENTARY

H. BRUCE WOOLFE

Formerly of British Instructional Films and now Chief of G.-B. Instructional

WHAT IS a documentary film? Some people declare it is any film that is non-fictional. With this definition I disagree. In the first place, I know many films that are non-fictional which, in my opinion, are not documentary. Secondly, I maintain that if a film contains fictional elements it does not necessarily become declassed as documentary. On the contrary, I believe that the addition of judicious fiction may considerably increase both the æsthetic value and the point of a film that in the main deals with a non-fictional subject. Further, I maintain that, to get the greatest appreciation from the greatest number of people, judicious fiction is necessary. If I were permitted to apply the word documentary to plays, I should describe several of Shakespeare's histories as documentary; and Shakespeare, being no mean craftsman, never hesitated to employ fiction when dealing with a documentary subject.

The documentary film at its best should depict phases of life and jobs of work as they are done by some portion of our people. By passing this knowledge on to other sections of the community it is definitely doing good work and making a contribution to our national life. By getting knowledge of how other sections of our countrymen work and live we are getting a better understanding of their outlook. No other medium can do this in anything like the same way as the film. I believe that documentary films should be strictly national and that only by being so will they be welcomed by other nations. I do not believe in internationalism in films, having seen the results that have attended the production of bi-lingual, multi-lingual and foreign co-operation productions in the past. Internationalism in Europe during the last ten years has had no better result than has attended internationalism in films. Likewise I believe that documentary films should show the efforts made by all classes in the advancement of our country and not be confined to one class only.

With these ideas firmly implanted in my mind as the result of experience and observation, I have recently put into production a film that will deal with interdependence within the Empire. It shows how co-operation is essential between the Mother Country and the Dominions, and how, in furthering that co-operation, Brains

evolved a mighty scheme, Capital financed it, and Labour carried it out. None of the three could have done anything alone. In order to secure proper continuity and personal interest it is necessary to incorporate elements of fiction here and there, keeping to the spirit and adding to the point. The film will be directed by Paul Rotha. I have had arguments with him over this fiction business and have given way on certain points, but he has admitted the principle and we are in agreement as to the method of treatment of the theme.

To make documentary films successful, one must believe in one's subject absolutely. Sincerity cannot be grafted on to a film; it must exist before a foot is shot. If that sincerity holds out until the end of a production, it shows on the screen. I cannot explain how or why; it is one of those intangible things that make the screen so powerful and so fascinating. It is useless to proclaim this in Wardour Street, because it is heresy to believe that a million dollars doesn't always show on the screen. I believe that sincerity on the screen is worth more than a million dollars and is much more likely to declare its presence.

I have been making documentary films for several years. One of my earliest efforts was made twelve years ago and was the record of the campaign in Palestine entitled *Armageddon*. It was passed as true by General Allenby and the Army Council. On its completion I showed it to every film renter in Wardour Street; they would have none of it! Because it contained no love interest it was suspect. The small capital of the company I was then responsible for was all sunk in this picture, and the position was serious. Something had to be done; no renter would take it; so a renting company had to be formed to exploit it. This was done and *Armageddon* was launched. It was eventually booked to eight times its cost. It was followed by other films of a similar type, all financially successful. But still the mentality of Wardour Street did not change.

A short while ago I made another documentary film and was informed that it would have been scrapped had it not been for the fact that the trade show had been booked. It was shown to the Trade and eventually booked to over a thousand theatres in this country, besides being sold to the Dominions. Still no change on the Wardour Street front.

Recently I was responsible for another documentary film which on being viewed was returned to me with the remarks, "Bored us stiff; no personal appeal; cut it down to eight hundred feet and it might go as a fill-up." I insisted on contractual obligations and the film was distributed, not with great enthusiasm or a deal of publicity, as can be imagined. It secured three runs, totalling eleven weeks, in the West End of London and has done well in the provinces. So much for Wardour Street!

Advertising agents tell us that if you have a good article and shout about it long enough and loud enough, you are certain of a response. I believe this is true. Although I have not shouted very loud, I have been declaring my beliefs for quite a long time and have at last evoked a response.

The Gaumont-British group have financed a company, G-B. Instructional, to devote itself to the production of documentary films, for a period of five years. Farsightedness and courage and belief in the future of the documentary film are necessary to put in hand a proposition of this description. By their action in this matter Gaumont-British have shown they have the courage to back that belief with finance, which is the crucial test. The new company will start under favourable conditions with a fixed determination to do its utmost to justify the belief reposed in it.

CINEMA LIBRARY

FILMCRAFT. By Adrian Brunel. (London: Newnes, 3s. 6d.) This book is not concerned with the technicalities of camera work and film processing, but with the actual production of films, from the scenario department to the editing bench. It goes through every phase of film production, even giving what so many writers of film handbooks have neglected, a detailed analysis of a given scenario, showing the why and wherefore of the inclusion and rejection of certain shots.

The inclusion of twelve appendices by experts is a happy idea, and special mention must be made of those by Ivor Montagu on "Creation," John Orton on "Direction," and Reginald Beck on "Sub-Standard Editing," in the last of which the writer emphasises the point that reversal stock can never be as satisfactory in the cutting-room as the negative-positive film. There is a glossary of film terms and several illustrations. L.

BROTHERS OF THE SNOW. By Luis Trenker. (London: Routledge, 7s. 6d.) If Trenker could write a book as well as he can make a film his autobiography would be twice as interesting. As it is, we never become interested in his early life, and his chapters on film-making are only superficially interesting. Hollywood's hot-houses, we are glad to know, however, have no attraction for Trenker the Alpinist, who longed for his snows throughout his visit to California. The book is worth reading to learn that Alpine snow is an antidote to Hollywood dope.

Notices of two novels from which films have been adapted—THE CHILD MANUELA (*Maedchen in Uniform*) and THE STRANGER'S RETURN—are held over until the next number.

THE FILM ABROAD

A SOVIET WRITER TAKES TO CINEMA

ALEXANDER WERTH

ONE OF THE latest Russian recruits to Western cinematography is Eugene Zamiatin, the brilliant novelist and playwright, whose mind is perhaps a little too ironical for the land of Five-Year enthusiasms. During the War he was in England building icebreakers for the Russian navy, and then, when the Revolution broke out, he returned to Russia to become one of the leading literary lights of the new régime. His output is small in quantity, but high in quality, and his super-concise prose, which is not so much narrative as a series of visual flashes, had many followers and imitators, both in the literary and in the cinematic field. But Zamiatin never quite adapted himself to Soviet conditions. There was a preciosity in his style which was a trifle "æsthetic"; his quaint theatrical fantasias of mujik humour were too indolent for the shock-brigade mind; some of his stories had too much of the human, and not enough of the collective interest; and when he wrote a fantasia with the tactless title "We"—a vision of the world's sublimely mechanical future—the Soviet critics thought that he had better be funny about something else, and the book was published in America.

Zamiatin is a good and loyal Soviet citizen, but with a touch of rebellious individualism; and about eighteen months ago he turned up in Paris to renew his long-standing acquaintance with the "rotten West." He seemed to like it, and has not gone back to Russia yet. But unlike Ehrenburg, who is in his element at Montparnasse, he has given up writing books until he goes back to Russia, and spends his time producing plays and writing articles and scenarios. His comedy, "The Flea," which is still going strong at the Moscow Art Theatre (where it was first produced in 1926), and which is an ingenious attempt to reconstruct Russian popular comedy, with a touch of *commedia dell' arte*, will be produced in Paris after an initial run at Brussels. It may go to London afterwards. As for articles, he writes for Barbusse's "Monde," "Europe," and other papers of more or less Bolshevik or drawing-room Bolshevik tendencies. He gave me lunch at his little furnished flat at Auteuil the other day. Holy Russia! Borsh, kasha, minced "cutlets," black

bread, kissel and vodka—White-Russian, Paris-made vodka. And after lunch we had cardboard-tube cigarettes stuffed with caporal. Zamiatin is forty-five, perhaps forty-eight, clean-shaven and almost English-looking, but for the sly mujik twinkle in his eyes.

"So you have taken to scenario-writing?"

"No, I am just going on with it. I had already worked on three films in Russia, where I took to scenario-writing in self-defence, as it were. It happened like this. There is a story of mine called 'Northern Love,' a bit Knut Hamsun'ish, full of Laplanders and reindeer. Ivanovsky, who afterwards did *Decembrists*, produced it. He shot most of the scenes at Alexandrovsk, on the Murman coast, and there is some glorious Arctic scenery in the film. It was a great success in the hey-day of the silent film. When I say that I had to act in self-defence, it was simply because they gave my story to one of their sworn-in scenario hacks; so I had to take it away from him.

"With my next film the very opposite happened. You know my story, 'The Cave'—it has been translated three or four times into English; it is the story of the ex-bourgeois couple living in their little room—their cave—in starved and frozen civil-wartime Leningrad, and worshipping the gluttonous god of the cave—the stove. A symbol of life, as it were. I started writing the scenario; but when I saw what they were doing with it I gave it up. My story was the tragedy about two ordinary human beings; they turned it into a propaganda film about the 'rotting ex-upper classes'—though Ermler, I admit, is a pretty able producer.

"At present they are working on my third scenario; this one is a talkie. *Iola* is its name—the story of a fishing-boat and of the man who loved it. It shows the hard life of the fishermen on the Arctic Ocean, and the hero gets drowned in an attempt to save the boat for which he had worked all his life. In this film, too, there is some good Arctic scenery. The last I heard was that the Moscow factory were still working on the film. It is a slow business."

"What about your film work here?"

"That's a different matter. When I first arrived I tried to work for Gaumont, but found them—what shall I say?—too inartistic. Then I wrote a scenario for Chaliapine on the subject of 'Stenka Razin,' a romantic, revolutionary affair, based on the folklore about the great robber chief of the Volga, and at the same time the hero of the first great peasant uprising. I sold it to Vandor Film, but after *Don Quixote* they are not in a hurry to do any more Chaliapine for the present. I am also writing a film version of my play *Attilla*; a spectacular theme, and a mighty significant one at a time when the Western world is about to be swept away by the Slav and Germanic hordes.

"But my biggest cinema job since leaving Russia has been my scenario of *Anna Karenina*; Pathé-Nathan have bought it, and Ozep, the producer of the *Brothers Karamazov*, will start on it in the spring, as soon as he is finished with Zweig's *Amok*. They are talking of Lil Dagover or Yvonne Printemps for the title-rôle. I admit that the holy shade of Tolstoy was an awful bother. You see, in turning the novel into a film I simply had to cut out all the non-visual matter, and, naturally, Levin, the Tolstoyan hero with his grasshopper philosophizing, had to be thrown overboard at once. I limited myself to the Karenin-Vronsky triangle. The dialogue had to be cut out, for both the dialogue and the psychology had to be translated into cinematic terms. The thing had to be visual and dynamic. The method of flash-presentation instead of narrative exposition was the method that you will find in all my books; so the medium was familiar enough to me. The dialogue is, naturally, also reduced to bare essentials, to mere significant flashes. There is one thing, however, which will infuriate the literary fetishists. There is plenty of movement—continuous movement—in the film; the visual material is good; and a good job will be made of the race-course, in particular. But you will remember that shortly after Anna's first meeting with Vronsky there is a lapse of one year, at the end of which he becomes her lover. That one year's courtship is not described in Tolstoy. Cinematically, you cannot convey the lapse of a whole year; and to convey this passage of time I inserted a number of flashlight episodes, showing the progress of Vronsky's courtship. I know they will cry sacrilege. But what can you do? On the screen things have to be *shown*, not *told*. In a way, all my literary work has been cinematic; I never *explained*; I always *showed* and *suggested*.

"And, after all," Zamiatin concluded, with a twinkle of self-satisfaction, "you know where Soviet cinema learned its method and its basic idea. Was it not from the flashily obscure Soviet books of the early twenties? *Quorum pars magna fui*."

PARIS, *December* 1933.

"ZERO DE CONDUITE"

JEAN VIGO'S film, *Zero de Conduite*, which has been attacked by the French censors, is an exposure of life in a provincial boarding school. The heroes are delicate children badly handled by greedy tyrants. Finally the boys rebel, and the mutiny gives the film much of its excitement and action. The film is a courageous and outspoken independent production in which Vigo had as his collaborators the Belgian cineaste Henri Storck, the composer Maurice Jaubert, and the photographers Boris Kaufman and Louis Berger. L. P.

THE FILM IN SOUTH AFRICA

H. R. VAN DER POEL

SOUTH AFRICA has probably had a fair share of the outstanding films of the world. Perhaps it was in the days of the Swedish Biograph and Nordisk films that the public first began to take notice. One remembers seeing Emil Jannings in *Anne Boleyn*. There are recollections of a number of the audience leaving before the end when *The Golem* was shown at the then foremost cinema in Cape Town; *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* being shown in the City Hall (the trade evidently did not want it); Stiller's *Hotel Imperial*, Lubitsch's *Forbidden Paradise*, Dupont's *Vaudeville* proving box-office successes. So were to a certain extent *Nanook* and *Grass*. On the other hand, Chaplin's *Woman of Paris*, Pabst's *Crisis*, *Jeanne Ney*, Flaherty's *Moana*, Grierson's *Drifters*, ran almost unnoticed in suburban houses or the cinema tea-rooms. Few recognised *The Street of Sorrows* as being what was left of Pabst's *Freudlose Gasse* with Garbo. The only Russian films worth mentioning were *Mother* and *Earth*. The silent era ended with the last of the Ufa specials, *Homecoming*, *Hungarian Rhapsody*, *The Wonderful Lie*, and *Pitz Palu*.

Whereas in the silent days one saw what was probably the pick of the world's films, the trade has made no attempt to introduce the outstanding Continental sound films. In view of the fact that German is almost invariably the foreign language taught at South African schools and universities, this is surprising.

Le Million, probably brought out as an experiment, was fairly successful. A significant feature of the sound era is the rapid headway made by British films as compared with the American product. The films from the Gainsborough studios in particular have proved popular successes. *Sunshine Susie* was no doubt as big a family success as elsewhere. Among the shorts *Ideal Cinemagazine* is easily the favourite. *With Cobham to Kivu* was received with much enthusiasm. We have, however, not seen any of Anthony Asquith's work since *A Cottage on Dartmoor*.

There is not a single theatre in the Union showing consistently films which have not been made with an eye on the box-office. The Cape Film Society, news of which already has appeared in *Cinema Quarterly*, has revived some of the outstanding films of the silent era. Their chief difficulty is the supply of suitable films. The outstanding film of the current season has been *Maedchen in Uniform*. Fragments of Iven's *Zuiderzeewerkem*, *Phillips-Radio*, Oscar Fischinger's *Filmstudie No. 7*, and Clair's *The Italian Straw Hat* have also been shown.

With a vast native population, the South African censors are faced with unusual difficulties. *Potemkin* was prohibited by the Customs. *The Blue Angel* was banned, while *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was passed for exhibition to European adult audiences. Strange things happen, although it is difficult to know whether the censors or the professional cutters are to blame. An instance is provided by *Pitz Palu*. On seeing the film for the second time, a few days after the *première*, one was astounded to find that a most important sequence had been eliminated.

Local production is at present confined to news, publicity or travel shorts. Earlier productions included some of Rider Haggard's novels. Probably the only significant South African production was *Die Voortrekkers*, produced by Harold Shaw in collaboration with the historian, Gustaf Preller, for African Film Productions. Based on historical events in the early pioneer days, *Die Voortrekkers* was, in some respects, a forerunner of *The Covered Wagon*. It differed in this respect, however, that only a few of those who took part were professionals. The cast included hundreds of natives from the kraals and mine compounds. *Die Voortrekkers* is unique in South African film production, and is still being shown throughout the country on the occasion of certain national celebrations.

Sub-standard production of documentary or experimental films is, as far as is known, non-existent. There are no societies for purely documentary or experimental work. Apparatus is expensive, although the dealers seem to be doing well. One surmises that a good deal of 16 m.m. stock is consumed every year for making family movies, with perhaps many attempts at aping Hollywood. The only important production on record is Professor Compton's document, *National Parks in America*. There is a rich field for documentary work still unexplored. The farmers' co-operatives, labour settlements, the mines, even the conditions created by the extreme drought, from which a large area of the agricultural districts is suffering at present, provide almost unlimited scope for documentary work.

While it may not be unusual to find Trenker's *Doomed Battalion* with only a half-filled house and, at the same time, crowds flocking round the corner to see Constance Bennett in *Bought*, and although the film critics may think Marion Gering (*Twenty-four Hours*) one of the outstanding women directors, the cinema is progressing in South Africa.

The fact that the founders of the Cape Film Society include prominent artists and educationalists while the majority of the members are people who have probably never been movie star worshippers, is not without significance.

MISCELLANY

PUDOVKIN ON SOUND

JOHN GRIERSON

PUDOVKIN sums it up by saying that we Occidentals have failed to use sound dramatically. We have not yet learned to make sound an essential factor in our film construction. Our dialogue is derivative of the stage, our songs of the music hall, our recitals of the lecture room, our natural sound of melodrama; and sound film seldom conveys any fuller sense of the object than mute film did before it. A worse sense if anything, for dialogue has depraved the sense of action. Pudovkin generalises perhaps too readily; forgetting, or not knowing, the split choruses of Lubitsch and Clair, the unemployment sequence of *Three-cornered Moon*, the gossip sequence of *The Night of June 13th*, and the other occasional ingenuities of our technique. But on the whole he is right. We do not use sound to develop the art we discovered with silent cinema. We use it so much for its derivative values—in dialogue, in interlude—that it slows our pace, makes image and sequence of image incidental to literary meaning, and diminishes the peculiar power of the screen.

Much of Pudovkin's theory, as set out in the new chapters of "Film Technique" (London: Newnes, 3s. 6d.), is no more than common sense; and we hardly need a special discourse on asynchronism (not even the longer word explains it) to tell us that the sound should complement the mute and not merely repeat it. The first function of sound, says Pudovkin (or his translators), is to "augment the potential expressiveness of the film's content." It widens the scope of the film; it allows more things to be said; and more variously; and more shortly. The sound strip and the silent must each follow its own rhythmic course. The synchronous use of sound is only "exceptionally correspondent to natural perception."

In so far as Pudovkin is exclusively interested in story values (he always is in his theory, if not in his films) his examples of asynchronism are curiously shallow. He thinks of a town-bred man in a desert accompanied by city noises; of a cry for help which silences

the natural sound of traffic and takes its place; of a total cessation of sound in a period of tension; and, in general, he makes a great ado of the difference between objective fact and its subjective interpretation by his characters. This, of course, is a sufficient gambit for an elementary dissertation on sound, and it is proper in Bolsheviks to regard us as imbeciles. But the interplay of subjective-objective is not a sufficient theoretical platform for sound film if we for a moment imagine the orchestrational possibilities of a complementary Bach or Beethoven. There is only passing excitement in the notion of a sound film "made correspondent to the objective world and man's perception of it together, where the image retains the image of the world, while the sound strip follows the changing rhythm of the course of man's perceptions; or vice versa" . . . only passing excitement when the two might so easily go off the earth together.

Such subjective-objective distinction may be real from the characters' point of view, but it is unreal from the artist's point of view. For him all elements of sound or mute are materials which together—together orchestrated—create his transfigured reality. They do not interpret as across a barrier, but are images together—give a meaning together—in a common recreated world. Mute and sound may swell together in a single symphony; silent images may join with sound images in a single poetry; a Greek chorus in sound, whether in formalised *vers libres* or in documentary bits and pieces, may join with narrative mute in a single recital. It is only misleading to make one a special interpretation of the other; sound film is thereby reduced to the wheezy psychological mechanics of people like Ibsen.

One should not puncture a man's theory by his own creative example, but *Deserter* is a better account of Pudovkin on sound than these chapters under review. The trouble with Pudovkin is that he performs like a poet and theorises like an elementary school teacher. As a theoretician, indeed, he very successfully makes inexplicable the very mature beauties he, as a creator, represents. How on a subjective-objective theory can he explain (*a*) the chorus of steamer whistles which attends his procession of ships (they are both orchestrations of perception); (*b*) his waltz-time accompaniment of waltz-timed traffic cops (they are both fancifications of perceived reality); (*c*) the triumphant march which accompanies his defeated street demonstration (they are both mounted in processional); (*d*) his cutting of rivetting machines into workers' applause (they are both rhetorical)? These are the high lights of sound accompaniment as he uses it, and it would be false analysis to say that the accompaniment in any one of these cases is an interpretation of the mood or meaning of the mute (or vice

versa). The effect they give is given together, the interpretation is a single interpretation. They are not two separate rhythms—or they ought not to be—but one single rhythm in which sound and mute are just so much imagistic raw material. The black and the white notes (the "Oban Times" said it more wisely than Pudovkin) must be played upon with an equal facility.

THEATRE AND CINEMA

IN ADDITION to the reissued "Film Technique" there has been published a short article by Pudovkin on "Acting—the Cinema *v.* the Theatre," in the October issue of "The Criterion" (London: Faber and Faber, 7s. 6d.). In it Pudovkin restates his theory that "the man before the ciné-camera must behave differently than the man behind the footlights," and emphasises that the value of real material to the cinema has not disappeared with the arrival of the sound film. His theories will be more fully considered in an article in a forthcoming number, in which C. R. Jones will discuss the difference between theatre and cinema.

AIRMAN'S WORLD

FOR CENTURIES our outlook has been conditioned by an earthly existence and our sense of space governed by contact with the surface of the earth. The advent of the aeroplane and airship has destroyed all this. Mr. Supf* seeks to express in words and photographs some idea of this new world above us, and to a limited extent he has been successful. The text is composed largely of extracts from the diaries and log-books of famous pilots—including Byrd, Lindbergh, Cobham, Pluschow, Mittelholzer, Udet—who write with first-hand knowledge. Their remarkable descriptions read more convincingly than the author's sentimental reminiscences, perhaps because they are roughly jotted down and vividly impressionistic. It is true that when travelling through the air a completely new attitude is obtainable, a sense of freedom and vastness which is impossible to the dweller on land. The majesty of clouds, the drama of storm, the hugeness of the sea cannot be appreciated unless an aerial view is forthcoming; and once that new emotion has been experienced it is difficult to return to an old outlook. The illustrations are an interesting collection, but it is regrettable that they are not better reproduced both in quality and size.

P. R.

* In "Airman's World" (London: Routledge, 10s. 6d.)

*WE TURN TO HISTORY

FROM the clangorous and peptonized horror of American civilization the camera is turning to the gracious beauty of a romantic past. Gangsters give place to barons, showgirls to royal mistresses. The chattering of the machine-gun will no longer spit across the sound-track; the screen will be filled with the patterns of epee and sword. Thus we may escape into a past seen through the rose-dim spectacles of nostalgia for a saner world.

But that gives no renewed invigoration for the struggle against values which would reduce our world to a shallow farce, a struggle to make strength and intellect and beauty the common heritage of mankind. The past is a tissue as complex and as splendid as the present; but the interpretations of the past are not the meanings we can put to the same things to-day. We solve our ancestors' problems; for those of to-day we have no precedent. Of what importance to us is finesse in love-making—the deceptions of an immoral game of sex played among the dust-smeared gilt of baroque obscenities—or a code which loosed slaughter and rape over Badajoz and Drogheda, or a sincerity which lit the fires of persecution throughout Europe?

Gin and kisses become romantic in periwigged heroes. Make gin and loveless kisses harmless by every means. The audience cannot project the unclean powder and curls of the eighteenth century or the splashed and dirty velvets of Henry VIII into its daily life. But a vicarious enjoyment of "selfishness, cruelty, ingratitude and sensuality, and the grossness of the King's manners," to quote a review, will not teach an audience self-respect. Historical films will not contribute the slightest inspiration to the people of to-day. Romance is not a value of life. It is an attitude of escape from reality. Reality for us is our civilization, with its amazing material progress, its striving for a clearer vision and a new scale of values to replace those destroyed by the war. We escaped into that stabler world in *Cavalcade*; a mild regret—what else was left? Let us have films which keep our world before us; the faith of the propagandist and the honesty of documentary side by side with American satire. Only when we cannot grasp the complexity of our civilization, the achievements of which we are so proud, as well as the flaws which deface them, will we turn to romance for escape. History is the stuff of our past; but the romantic history of the film is the dressing up of a child who suffers from inferiority, an unworthy escape from ourselves and our civilization.

THOMAS SIMMS.

* A reply to Philip Lindsay. See "The Camera Turns on History," *Cinema Quarterly*, Autumn, 1933.

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

FORSYTH HARDY

MORE OBVIOUSLY than usual, the films of the quarter emphasise the cinema's dependence on literature and the theatre for its material. So large a proportion of films are adapted either from plays or novels that we have unconsciously come to look on this wholesale derivation as an accepted practice, and are in danger of losing sight of the fact that it represents cinema's least creditable aspect as an independent entertainment and a distinctive art. Because cinema can never have any real prestige among the arts while its productions are mere adapted versions of themes already expressed elsewhere. The greatest plays are not dramatised versions of books; and the greatest films are not photographs of stage plays.

It would not be intelligent, however, to ignore the reasons for this consistent derivation. As always, the chief are commercial. A popular play, novel, or silent film has already an assured public, advance publicity, and general goodwill—all valuable box-office assets. So many films are needed so quickly that the producers are timorous of new ideas, and prefer ready-made material created for other forms of expression and tried and tested elsewhere. Also, the number of authors and artists who understand and use the film as a medium for expressing their ideas is still small, though it is probably larger than the film companies allow us to realise, and the supply of original material for the screen cannot be great. But these reasons are not sufficient to justify the continued and increased dependence of the cinema on literature and the theatre, not sufficient to excuse the film producer's lack of courage to tackle or sponsor the task of creation.

It is not impossible, of course, for a good play to be used as the basis of a good film. *Maedchen in Uniform* was a good film, not because it was a photograph of a good play, but because Leontine Sagan expressed the theme in a form which was essentially of the cinema. Similarly with Milestone's *The Front Page*. And this quarter has produced *Three-cornered Moon*, adapted from a play by Gertrude Tonkonogy. This, though it retains the theatrical qualities of amusing situation and clever dialogue, is close to the cinema in its intimate observation of everyday life, and Elliot Nugent has given it a unity of mood and movement only possible on the screen. Not

since *The Royal Family of Broadway* has there been a comedy so delicately devised and so intelligently played; and I cannot remember a film since *The Crowd*, by King Vidor, that so successfully and with so little artificiality strove to give us the plain honour of families and affections. But this is an exception among adaptations. Few of those who adapt plays or novels for the screen have the courage and imagination necessary to overcome the difficulties of their job: the majority choose the lazy way of simple representation, shelving the task of re-casting the material in a pure film form, and their work is ruled out of any serious appreciation of the cinema.

Considered from this point of view, the films of the quarter from Britain and America are not very imposing or important. New versions of *The Wandering Jew*, *Sorrell and Son*, and *The Constant Nymph* have been made in Britain, and *Turkey Time* and *Red Wagon* have been adapted. The last is the most interesting film made by British International since Hitchcock's *Murder*. Its story takes it out into the English country-side, which, if indifferently photographed, is better than an Elstree set, and the film, despite its inconsistencies, has a welcome sense of movement. The best British film of the quarter has been Victor Saville's *Friday the Thirteenth*, which, based on an original story, makes a real attempt to cut clear of movie commonplace. Its basic idea of turning the clock back on the lives of a number of people involved in a disaster has been used before by Thornton Wilder in "The Bridge of San Luis Rey"; but it is a good dramatic idea, and here the application—to a bus smash in London—is done with fluency and efficiency. A great film could not have been made of so facile a plot; but Saville has made an ingenious and entertaining one.

America's films of the quarter also indicate considerable dependence on the novelist and the playwright. *Berkeley Square* preserves the intelligent dialogue and interesting theme of an admirable play; *Service*, a little less skilfully, does the same for C. L. Anthony's work; and *Dinner at Eight*, another faithful play adaptation, gives M.G.M. an opportunity for a star display. *Ann Vickers*, *Jennie Gerhardt*, and *The Invisible Man* are variously representative of the novels used for films. With *Power and Glory*, however, an interesting experiment has been made with a form of narration new to cinema, in which the action is dependent on the memories of a man telling a story. Had the material of the film been more intelligent, the method might have attracted closer attention. As it is, we shall probably hear of "narratage" again.

Among the other American films of the quarter are *This Day and Age*, in which Cecil de Mille turns to modern times again and releases a dangerous incitement to anarchy in a story similar in some respects to *M*; and *Blonde Bombshell*, in which Hollywood, not content

with the self-exposure of *Once in a Lifetime*, continues with an almost malicious delight to laugh at itself. We have also seen *I'm No Angel*, to which Eric Knight refers in his article on "Synthetic America."

Outside of Britain and America, the most interesting developments have taken place in France, and the importance of *La Maternelle* and *Poil de Carotte* is discussed by Paul Rotha. Russia makes a single but significant contribution to the quarter with *Deserter*.

Several of the documentary films produced by the E.M.B. Film Unit have been issued during the quarter, and these will be considered, with the new films of Basil Wright and Arthur Elton, in a forthcoming article.

DESERTER

Production: Mejrabpomfilm. Direction: V. I. Pudovkin. Scenario: N. Agadjanova-Shutko, M. Krasnostavski, A. Lezebnikov. Photography: A. N. Golovnia. Art-Direction: A. Kozlovski. Music: I. Shaporin.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the London Film Society for importing this new Pudovkin film, for although it may not take us with fire, as did *Storm Over Asia* and *Mother*, it is nevertheless a sizeable attempt which demands serious concentration.

In *Deserter* Pudovkin attempts to cover a greater canvas than any director before him, selecting a theme more complex and wide-meaning than any yet tackled in the Soviet or other producing centre. I confess to being unable to describe the material in detail. In its giant stride the narrative embraces most of the vital social problems of a harassed world to-day—the struggle between the classes, unemployment and poverty, the tragedy brought about by economic crisis, the suffering of the working class, new hope in new leaderships, new ideals and new generations. There is tragedy, deep-down and stark. There is comedy, transient but catching. There is satire, penetrating and unanswerable. Whatever its faults, and it has many, its director was inspired, and that is a sign of greatness. By its very stature the picture is awe-inspiring. Only a Pudovkin could have attempted the task and only a Pudovkin could have fallen short of success by so small a margin of failure.

The central figure is a dock-worker in the Hamburg shipyards, involved in endless strikes and wage-disputes. He is chosen as a delegate to the Soviet Union, where he decides to remain and join in the work of the Five-Year Plan. But he realises that he is a deserter to his comrades in Germany and returns to take up the struggle on his native soil.

The relation of the German worker to the mass is maintained

by dialectic argument. Long and frequent passages of dialogue, treated in the crudest newsreel method, serve to put across the Marxist philosophy. To the audience with no knowledge of the Russian language these are naturally the dullest moments, relieved only by the sudden crises of strike and conflict. The first part of the film is probably the best. Pudovkin has always excelled at setting the stage and the initial statement of his argument. You will recall *St. Petersburg* and *Storm Over Asia* in this connection. The sequences in the shipbuilding yards at Hamburg, the weakening of the strikers and the final breaking of the strike by blacklegs and machine-guns are the finest descriptive passages. Yet even in these I felt that Pudovkin failed to get below the surface of the incidents. His proletarian meetings did not secure my sympathy. There was no sense in the shouting mouths of workers. They behaved like bawling agitators and not like workmen fighting for an honest wage. By now, also, I had imagined that Pudovkin had realised the futility of exaggeration, but still there is the capitalist presented as a worthless, half-witted maniac, too lazy to speak, too tired to yawn. The libel is so grossly untrue, the effigy so patently childish, that the social purpose fails to score. Pudovkin cannot afford to lie, no matter what propaganda is served. It weakens his case and destroys our attention.

Technically, the film is as uneven as the presentation of its theme. Moments of inspired direction and brilliant cutting are alternated with long passages of mediocre cinematics which do not seem the work of the same man. Here and there flashes of technical skill stab us in the dark—falling chains, riveters at work, a riot with the police, a suicide in the street. But they are all too rare amid the monotonous treatment of the dialogue scenes. The sound is handled carefully and is based on a theory of conflicts. Unlike most opinions, I found some of it effective. Shaporin's music was well edited with actual sounds. At times it was used to create audience emotion in direct contradiction to the visual images. Gay music accompanies a suicide, busy traffic is cut to the rhythm of a waltz to express the lazy luxury of the capitalist world with the policeman at point-duty performing the dual tasks of conductor of traffic and music. But against all this we must bear with long, ugly silences and black-outs, disjointed and irritating.

Two years of toil have gone into the making of this strange mixture. With *A Simple Case* Pudovkin entered a side-track, seeking to impose formal method on theme. With *Deserter* he has penetrated further into the wilderness. But I cannot help but admire his courage and inspiration, his integrity and knowledge; and who are we to say whether he is right or wrong when the ground that he is treading is still unexplored?

PAUL ROTHA.

LA MATERNELLE

Production: Photosonor. Direction: Benoit-Levy and Marie Epstein. Photography: G. Asselin. Art Direction: Max Rossi. Music: Edouard Flament. With Madeline Renaud, Mady Berry, Paulette Flambert.

This surely is the child-picture to end child-pictures for the time being; and no better picture could be found to mark a semi-colon in this vogue for child actors. But let me say outright that this is in many ways an admirable film, most intelligently made, and played on all sides with a tenderness and sensibility that compel our respect. It is a story of Rose who, disappointed in love and deserted by her fiancé, takes work as a nursemaid in a children's school. Among the kids is Marie, whose mother is a tart, and thus the child is left much alone. She is known to the staff as being "difficult," in that her mentality is curiously complex. Her particular liking for animals plays an important part in events. When the old cook is about to throw a live mouse into the fire, it is Marie who struggles and bites to prevent the creature from being harmed. And as you expect, Marie's queer aloofness attracts to her the suppressed Rose. So the picture develops until the doctor, who is one of the superintendents of the school, declares his wish to marry Rose. Thus, once again, little Marie sees a man taking away her beloved one, just as she had seen her mother depart, and the child throws herself into the river. A rescue is effected, however.

Not particularly well-edited or photographed, the picture is notable for its brilliant treatment of the child mind, and the two directors are to be congratulated on their knowledge of child psychology. Throughout there are frequent incidents which reveal a deep understanding of children's mind-behaviour, from the little boy who cannot smile to the odd twisted attitude adopted by Marie when she is unhappy. The naturalness of the characterisation on the part of the adults and their attitude towards the children—one of the most difficult things to obtain on the screen—demands particular praise. Comedy is plentiful but is never forced. Sympathy is forthcoming for even the head-mistress because her moron mind is presented so naturally that her narrowness of outlook is to be pitied rather than condemned. Such sympathetic handling is all the more remarkable when we consider that no single player could be described as being physically likeable. Even little Marie, with her crooked teeth, sticking-out plaits and wan, thin face, is hardly attractive, and yet our sympathy is wholly with her. There are many emotionally disturbing moments; the final scene, when the doctor and Marie shake hands and become friends, being among the high spots of the year's cinema.

From Wyn Harris's 16 mm. record of the Everest Expedition, taken without previous experience on a Kodak camera. The film, which lasts for 75 minutes, has been publicly shown on a full screen at the London Polytechnic and should do much to popularise sub-standard production. Enquiries regarding the hire of this film should be sent to the Royal Geographical Society, Kensington, London, S.W.7.

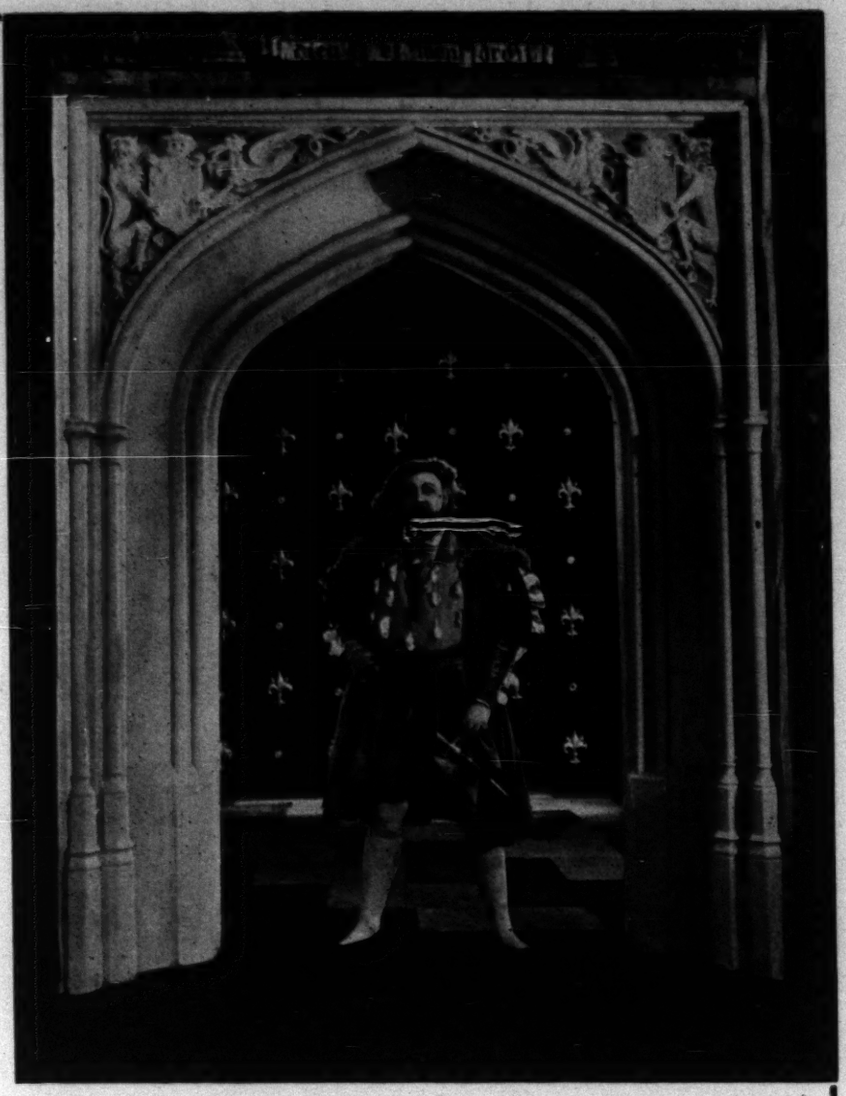
Below

From Fritz Lang's "The Spy." One of the Ufa "classics" which is now available for home projection in the 9.5 mm. Pathescope Library.

LONDON FILMS

PROUDLY PRESENT

• CHARLES LAUGHTON •



"THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII"

IN

Directed by

ALEXANDER KORDA

•

The Film that will make Screen History

The production as a whole is unpretentious, singularly free from novelty technique and obviously inexpensive. In no other country but France would such a theme be considered movie, and yet it teaches every producer in Britain and America the value of psychology and treatment in movie-approach. Apart from its general appeal, which should be wide, it is a film which I would like shown to every school-teacher and worker in child-welfare organizations. They would find much to learn.

PAUL ROTHA.

POIL DE CAROTTE

Production: Vandal and Delluc. Direction: Duvivier. Photography: Thiraud and Monniot. Montage: Marthe Poncin. With Robert Lynen, Felix Baur, etc.

THIS IS a film which is particularly hard to assess. It has much which gives pleasure and much which is ridiculous; an odd mixture of the vices and virtues of cinema. If I recommend it, it is because Duvivier has something which the makers of other child films at the moment lack. If I abuse it, it is because there is so much nonsense about its character-drawing and because the case which it puts is surely unique and bears little relation to the wide problem of child-psychology. From the beginning we feel that this eccentric family cannot exist, that such conditions as those which drive young Poil de Carotte to attempt suicide are falsely conceived. Yet, despite this unbelief, Duvivier has created such a background with his trees and clouds and animals that portions of the film draw breath and for a fleeting moment exist. There are some great moments, moments which will remain in your mind, such as the wedding-march across the sun-splashed meadows and the crazy drive home in the gig. But return to the studio and Duvivier returns to his crude background, his stupid, spoilt children, his bearish father, his good-natured uncle, his overdrawn, overacted and exasperating mother—all figures from a fairy book. Not for one moment can we pretend that he deals seriously with the complexities of childhood or that he creates in Poil de Carotte a believable child.

It is the same from a technical aspect. Some sequences are delightfully handled, simple and direct; others are absurdly pretentious with trick effects and double-exposures. A great deal has been made of Robert Lynen's performance. Much as I admire his expressive capabilities and undoubted charm, you cannot compare his artificial playing with the naturalness of young Paulette Flambert in *La Maternelle*. The two men give skilled performances.

PAUL ROTHA.

HUNTED PEOPLE (LE LOUP GAROU)

Direction: Friedrich Feher. Camera: Ewald Daub. Scenario: Feher and Fraenkel. Art Direction: E. Scharf. With Eugene Klöpfer, Hans Feher, Vladimir Sokolov, Magda Sonja, Camilla Spira, Friederich Ettel, Emilia Unda.

Little seems to be known of how this picture came to be made, when or where it was produced, or even who sponsored it. It opens with a fancy impression of Marseilles—the docks, the narrow streets, the steel bridge, the ministry of justice—and then by means of a viaduct along the coast takes us to the little village of Longville. Here a stout, middle-aged and prosperous joiner has just been married for the second time. He has risen in the world and has secured for his new wife the pretty daughter of the mayor. But while the nuptial festivities are at their height the local *gendarmerie* has identified the husband in a photograph of the bridal pair published in the Press as none other than an escaped convict. According to the law of France, the husband cannot be reimprisoned if he has eluded capture for ten years. Needless to say, the ten years are up all save for two days.

A *gendarme* presents himself at the house. Immediately the jolly joiner knows the game is up, but he decides to make a run for it. Accompanied by his small son, Boubou, he contrives to get away from the guarded house by hiding in a coffin (a good piece of cinema, this) while his wife and guests are making merry. He gets an illicit lift on a train, escapes in a tunnel and wanders about the streets of Marseilles. At every corner he hears a broadcast description of himself and his son. He secures a change of clothes for them both from a pawnbroker (admirably played by our old friend Vladimir Sokolov), sleeps with the down-and-outs in the docks, is disturbed by the fort sentries, makes a dash for the fair-ground, where the legless lady in a freak show turns out to be the sister of the woman he is supposed to have murdered and who really committed the crime herself.

In all this you will see ordinary melodrama without any distinction. But there are three things which lift the film above the conventional: the treatment, the acting, and the music.

In these days of "come up and see me" entertainment it is seldom we come across a film which is built up on an analysis of a single mood. For that we must go right back to the tradition of the early Germans—to *The Street*, *New Year's Eve*, *The Cab* and *Phantom*. The events in Feher's film are immaterial. There is one situation at the beginning; the rest is logical conclusion. The fast-moving sequences are simply a framework on which to hang a study of fear,

a grim paralysis of body and soul such as only the German movie can express with full grandeur.

The fat jolly joiner, who is suddenly seized with a paroxysm of fear that his carefully-built-up life will be shattered, is played by that stage-actor Eugene Klöpfer, whom you will recall in *The Street*, *New Year's Eve*, *Martin Luther* and *The Earl of Essex*. He has the true Germanic laboured style of heavy movements, which will remind you of Jannings. And it is his acting, drawn out by Feher's handling, that largely makes this picture interesting. His acting spreads beyond him, envelops the environment, bends the material to his will, just as Veidt in *The Student of Prague* or Wegener in *The Golem*. But it has this difference, that unlike the early German films it is played largely against an authentic background. The streets and alleys of Marseilles play as great a part in the building of the fear mood as the bogey man of Boubou's imagination. That is where Feher has been clever.

Although no credit is given for the music, it is obviously specially written for the film. Its phrasing is admirably in sympathy with the changes of mood. It swells to a climax, cuts sharp to silence, builds slowly again and so on. It is essentially an accompaniment emphasising the action, and I found it singularly successful.

PAUL ROTHA.

MAYOR OF HELL

Production: Warner Brothers. Scenario: Chodorov. Direction: Archie Mayo. Photography: Barry McGill. Editing: Jack Kellifer. With James Cagney, Dudley Digges, Madge Evans, Frankie Darro.

WHAT IF this picture is inspired by *The Road to Life*? The inspiration is good and the idea behind the film admirable. It marks one of the biggest steps forward in the American movie's attempt to find themes in current social material. Do not confuse it casually with De Mille's *This Day and Age*. It is more important.

A gang of kid hooligans is broken up by the police and the ringleaders sent to a reform school, which is being run on a graft basis by a particularly villainous superintendent. A new deputy commissioner (Cagney) is appointed as a result of his assistance in a racket political election. The new commissioner has three virtues: an eye for women, a liking for "guts" and a sense of fairplay. The woman is the nurse at the school. He contrives to take over the running of the school, establishes a self-governing republic among the boys and all is well—perhaps with a little too much haste to be wholly convincing. But the racket behind him forces a shooting and he has to go under cover. The late superintendent again takes over, reinstates his old methods, leading eventually to a boy's death.

The boys revolt, try the superintendent in their court, where he commits suicide. Cagney arrives in time to quell the revolt, makes the boys see reason and continues his job as superintendent with the girl as his wife.

There is more to it than this. The wider issues of crime and education are brought up in a manner new, at any rate, to American cinema. Some exposure is made of the system obtaining in American reform schools, its obvious chance for graft management and a solution offered. You may not agree with much of the detail, but you cannot deny the exposure, and if you have any feelings at all towards the prevailing conditions of society you cannot fail to agree that here the cinema is on its right ground, facing realities as they must be faced. You may complain with me that the scenario does not go far enough, that it does not expose the roots of the social system which permits such education and upbringing, that we are not shown the boys' homes and environment which condition their outlook, that the film is, in fact, only a half-way house—but at the same time you will agree that its theme and treatment are a welcome change from ordinary Hollywood sin stories.

It has nothing new in technique. Cagney is excellent and conveys the impression that he is sincere in his behaviour. Dudley Digges overacts, but the mob-mentality demands it. It is one of the most stimulating American films I have seen for months.

PAUL ROTHA.

WORTH NOTING

S.O.S. ICEBERG (*American. Universal*). The Arnold Fanck brigade of Alpine Endeavour has, I am sorry to say, suffered a landslide in Universal's new epic of the North. All the old stunts are paraded afresh: white snows and dark skies, aeroplane rescues and crashing ice, but this time the story fails even to attempt probability and frankly returns to the '05 melos. The picture was apparently conceived by the Fanck outfit in Germany, but was taken over by Universal when the original sponsors dropped out; consequently, the film comes out as conceived by little Laemmle Junior, and is prefaced by a personal tribute to the staff who gave their heroic efforts for the sake of Uncle Carl Laemmle and all. If you can stomach all this, there is some remarkable long-focus photography of icebergs and glaciers which is new to the screen from the cameras of Schneeberger and Angst, some very beautiful aerial shots secured by the dauntless Udet, and a nicely handled Esquimaux village sequence. And it all winds up with yet another "Laemmle special" ending, the superimposed figures marching onwards into the sky.

P. R.

THE WANDERING JEW (*British. Twickenham Film Studios*). This film has a magnificent opportunity to pattern the landscape of history. But theatrical conventions still tie the hands of British producers. "Costumes by Clarkson" in the credit titles typifies the director's attitude. In not one particular does the play emerge into movement. True to the tradition of costume pictures, sex is the motivation of every incident. The Jew wanders through history on a series of amorous exploits.

We once claimed that movie knocked a hole in the theatre wall. This picture demonstrates how we are replacing the walls of the theatre with the limits of the screen. Nothing ever happens outside the frame; we are ever conscious of the scenes brought to life by the producer's command to shoot.

This pageant of sex is graced by four of our leading stage actresses who belong to the British school "never forget you are a lady." But Conrad Veidt is the film, and the film is Conrad Veidt, and your enjoyment will depend on whether you can stand ten reels of Veidt undiluted, with no directional bridling. He runs the gamut of emotions without restraint. The chief virtues of this film have their source in Sidney Blythe, the cameraman, whose lighting and photography are consistently brilliant.

D. F. TAYLOR.

FOOTLIGHT PARADE (*American. Warner Brothers*). This is a triumph of showmanship. It belongs to a familiar type of screen revue, but the exploitation of spectacle has seldom produced a film in which the pictorial values are so outstanding. Its appeal is primarily to the eye. The musical trimmings are inferior to those of *Forty-Second Street*, hitherto regarded as the acme of the Warner achievement in revue. One sequence—for which Lloyd Bacon, the director, and George Barnes, the cameraman, take most of the credit—is probably the loveliest creation yet seen in films of this type. It owes much to the Goldwyn discovery, in *The Kid From Spain*, that choreographic patterns can be charmingly described in a swimming-pool by amphibious bathing beauties. It is, however, a finer achievement, and the evolutions of the tinselled bodies—now spreading outward like flower petals, now assembling in coils like a vast snake—testify to real feeling for the beauty of mass movement. The camera angles are well chosen. It was a happy thought to shoot part of the aquatic ballet from below the water. The result is magical. The film will have interest for admirers of James Cagney. He surprisingly reveals gifts as a singer and tap-dancer.

CAMPBELL NAIRNE.

FILM SOCIETIES

MORE NEW VENTURES

AFTER HOLDING a preliminary meeting in May last, the Croydon Film Society organised a further public meeting at the Croydon Picture House on 5th November, Anthony Asquith addressing the meeting. The result of these two meetings was very encouraging, and it was decided to proceed with arrangements for the first season. An application for permission to hold meetings on Sunday afternoons was accordingly made to the Croydon Council and, after a lengthy discussion, permission was refused. A subsequent application was successful, and a licence has now been granted, subject, however, to the following extraordinary terms:—(*a*) 7½ per cent. of the Society's income to be devoted to charity; (*b*) all films to be submitted to a sub-committee of the Croydon Council; and (*c*) not more than two guest tickets to be allotted to any one member. The Hon. Secretary is G. R. Bailey, 51 High Street, Croydon.

AFTER ALL arrangements had been made to hold the performances of the third season of the Leeds Film Group on Sunday evenings at the Academy Cinema, the Magistrates reconsidered their decision and withdrew their licence. Formerly, performances of silent films had been given on week nights in a small private theatre.

Meanwhile an attempt is being made to form a society in Huddersfield, and if the sanction of the Watch Committee can be obtained, fortnightly performances will be given on Sunday evenings. Three hundred members are required to make possible a subscription of 10s. 6d. for six or eight shows.

ABERDEEN FILM Guild intends to start a series of Sunday performances when negotiations for a suitable cinema are completed. The Hon. Secretary is J. M. Mitchell, *Press and Journal* Office, Aberdeen.

THE FILM SOCIETY, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1. 5th Nov. *I Couldn't have Believed It* (Publicity Films). Zuts' Cartoon (Film Soc.). Pudovkin's *Deserter* (Film Soc.). 19th Nov. *Canal Barge* (Film Soc.). E.M.B. Shorts. *Anna and Elisabeth* (Film Soc.). 10th Dec. *Castles and Fisherfolk* (Publicity Films). *Architects' Congress* (Film Soc.). Fischinger's Hand Drawn Sound Experiment (Film Soc.). *A.B.C. in Sound* (Film Soc.). Extracts from Ruttmann's *Acciaio* (Film Soc.). *L'Affaire est Dans le Sac* (Film Soc.).

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. S. G. Hawes, 163 Pershore Road, Birmingham. 22nd October. *Tour de Chant* (Film Soc.). *Shakespeare's Country* (Gaumont). *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick* (Film Soc.). 12th November. *Zuyderzee Dyke* (Film Soc.). *King's English* (B.I.F.). *Coral and its Creatures*. *Le Rosier de Madame Husson* (Film Soc.). 10th Dec. E.M.B. Films. *The Schufftan Process* (Process Productions). Reiniger's *Harlequin* (Film Soc.). *Der Traumende Mund* (Film Soc.).

CHESHIRE FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. Diana Baerlein, Whatcroft Hall, Northwich. 19th Oct. *Zuyderzee Dyke* (Film Soc.). Disney's *Monkey Melodies* (Gaumont). *Barbarina* (Beacon). 9th Nov. *Marvels of the Amazon. En Natt.* (Film Soc.) 7th December. *Charleston* (Film Soc.). *Mickey in Arabia* (Gaumont). *Tabu* (Paramount).

CROYDON FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. G. R. Bailey, 51 High Street, Croydon. 3rd Dec. *Turbulent Timber* (G.B. Distributors). *Lichtertanz* (Filmophone). *Blue-bottles* (Film Soc.). *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick* (Film Soc.).

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD, 17 S. St. Andrew Street, Edinburgh, 2. 29th Oct. *Black Diamonds* (Wardour). Excerpt from *Love on Wheels* (Gaumont). *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick* (Film Soc.). 19th Nov. Cinemagazine, *Is Gretna Green* (Gaumont). *Pacific 231* (Film Soc.). *The Country Comes to Town* (Gaumont). *The Road to Life* (Arcos). 10th Dec. *Power* (Zenifilms). *Ekstase* (Film Soc.). *Le Quatorze Juillet* (Film Soc.).

On 16th Oct. Victor Saville lectured to the Guild, accompanied by Madeleine Carroll, and on 9th Dec. an address was given by Miss Lockett, of G.-B. Instructional Films, following which there was an exhibition of Gaumont 16mm. films.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW. Hon. Sec. D. Paterson Walker, 127 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2. 5th Nov. *King's English* (B.I.F.). *Pacific 231* (Film Soc.). *Le Quatorze Juillet* (Film Soc.). 29th Nov. *Flight Machine* (B.I.F.). *Prague* (Film Soc.). *Harlequin* (Film Soc.). *Der Traumende Mund* (Film Soc.). 10th Dec. *The Blue Angel* (Wardour). *Sous les Toits de Paris* (Wardour).

On 10th Dec. John Grierson addressed the Society on his work as a documentary director.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Vaughan College, Leicester. 21st Oct. *Cambridge* (B.I.F.). *A Bronx Morning* (Film Soc.). *Brumes D'Automne* (Film Soc.). *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick* (Film Soc.). 18th Nov. *Springtime at the Zoo* (B.I.F.). Disney's *Fox Hunt* (Gaumont). *Der Traumende Mund* (Film Soc.).

MAIDSTONE FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. Miss G. M. Nicholson, Fowden Hall, London Road, Maidstone. This new society holds its performances on Sunday evenings at the Palace Theatre. The subscription is 10s. 6d. The first performance included *The Blue Light* (Universal). 17th Dec. *En Natt* (A.P.&D.). *New Generation* (New Era).

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, 86 Hulton Street, Salford. 21st Oct. *Lichtertanz* (Filmophone). *Harlequin* (Film Soc.). *Kino Parade* (Arcos). *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.* 18th Nov. *Peasant Women of Riazan. World Melody.* 16th Dec. *The Battle of Life. Joan of Arc.*

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, 44 Ullet Road, Liverpool, 17. 20th Oct. *Don Quixote* (U. Artists). *Contact* (Wardour). 25th Nov. *The Road to Life* (Arcos). On 30th Nov. a lecture was given by Paul Rotha. During January there is to be an exhibition of stills and a demonstration of sub-standard apparatus.

NORTHWICH FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. W. Baldwin Fletcher, I.C.I. (Alkali) Ltd., Winnington, Northwich. This new society holds its performances on week-day evenings in the Recreation Park Pavilion. It has no subscription, other than an admission charge to each performance. 27th Sept. *The Invasion of Shanghai* (Film Soc.). Mickey Mouse. *Pitz Palu* (Universal). 26th Oct. *Contact* (Wardour). *This is Paris that Was.* Mickey Mouse. *Kameradschaft* (Nat. Distributors). 29th Nov. *Gold of the North* (Gaumont). *Licthertanz* (Filmophone). *Le Million* (Universal).

OXFORD CITY FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec. Mrs. Hilda Harrisson, Sandlands, Boars Hill, Oxford. This society is now properly established and plans to give eight performances in the Scala Cinema. The subscription is 10s. 5th Nov. *Bluebottles* (Film Soc.). Mickey Mouse. *Turbulent Timber* (G.B. Distributors). *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick* (Film Soc.). 3rd Dec. *The Danube*. Disney's *Flowers and Trees* (United Artists). *Westfront 1918* (Film Soc.). 29th Nov. *The Front Page* (United Artists). *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Film Soc.). 17th Dec. *Pacific 231* (Film Soc.). *Trader Mickey* (Gaumont). *Bathtime at the Zoo* (B.I.F.). *The Ghost that Never Returns* (Arcos).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY FILM SOCIETY. 15th Oct. *Harlequin* (Film Soc.). Disney's *Skeleton Dance* (Gaumont). *Der Traumende Mund* (Film Soc.). 29th Oct. *Tour de Chant* (Film Soc.). Chaplin's *Floorwalker* (Radio). *Pred Maturitou* (Film Soc.). 26th Nov. *Canal Barge* (Film Soc.). *October 15*. Disney's *Babes in the Wood* (United Artists). *Potemkin* (Arcos). 12th Nov. *Symphony of the Sea* (B.I.F.). Moholy Nagy's *Lichtspiel* (Film Soc.). Disney's *Bears and Bees* (United Artists). *Zoo in Budapest* (Fox).

SOUTHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY. Hon. General Sec., J. S. Fairfax-Jones. Southampton: A. Tomlinson, D. A. Yeaman, 21 Ethelbert Avenue, Bassett Green. Winchester: Ruth Keyser, C. J. Blackbourne, 12 St. Swithan Street. All performances are now held on Sunday afternoon, and a branch establishment has been formed at Winchester. The society has a group for lectures and discussions, and a course of lectures at University College is in course of negotiation. 12th Nov. *Turbulent Timber* (G.B. Distributors). *Harlequin* (Film Soc.). *Prague* (Film Soc.). *A Nous La Liberté* (Universal). 3rd Dec. *Magic Myxies* (B.I.F.). *Fischinger Abstract* (Filmophone). *Steel* (G.B. Distributors). *Der Traumende Mund* (Film Soc).

WEST ESSEX FILM SOCIETY. Hon. Sec., A. L. Watson, 9 First Avenue, Plaistow. This new society has a clubroom and library, and is making a trailer to advertise its activities on the local screens. Work will shortly commence on a silhouette film based on a classic poem. Early in January there will be given a performance of revived silent films. The subscription is 6s. a quarter.

THE LONDON University Film Society held a number of performances of silent films earlier in the year in the theatre at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Its activities are now temporarily suspended pending the installation of sound apparatus at that theatre.

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IFMA

A FEW months ago the Independent Film-Makers Association was started. As with most new schemes at their inception, there were doubts about it. Were there enough amateurs wanting specialised information about definite aspects of their work who were not catered for by the local societies and groups? Were there even people taking their work seriously enough to want professional advice?

There were. People have wanted all sorts of advice. Some setting out on their first movie Odyssey have written for information about equipment. For contacts with other workers. For criticism of their films. They have written to argue the finer points of Pudovkin on Sound, or to find out the right filters to take to the West Indies.

In fact, a host of keen people want to make films and want to make those films as well as possible. To these our advisers have given the best of their professional experience; experience that means something; the experience of people who are making films.

The scheme is started—that, for the moment, is enough.

STUART LEGG's article in this issue is important, very important. Read it—learn it by heart even—but above all put it into practice. The clearer the treatment the better chance the finished film has of being a comprehensive whole.

THE FIRST issue of the Ifma Bulletin will appear very shortly It will contain details of a Summer School, Scenario Service and Film Exchange plans.

INVITATION TO INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS

At the International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art, which is to be held at Venice, in August, under the auspices of the *XIX Biennale d'Arte*, there will be presented a representative selection of the best films of all nations. In addition to the usual commercial productions, the organisers are anxious to include films by independent and vanguard producers, to whom an invitation to co-operate has been issued by Attilio Fontana, Exhibition Secretary, I.I.E.C., Via Lazzaro Spallanzani la, Rome. Before submitting films, which must be of recent production and "of the highest artistic value," a full description and a selection of stills should be sent to Rome.

Included in the new Gaumont-British Equipments 16 mm. sound-on-film library are *Sunshine Susie*, *Jack's the Boy*, *Love on Wheels* and *Rome Express*. A number of *Ideal Cinemagazines* and *Gainsborough Miniatures* are also available. All films are non-flam and may be hired for 5s. per reel per day.

In conjunction with the Manchester Ramblers' Federation the Manchester Film Society is producing a film called *Manchester at Work and Play*. It also intends to make an abstract entitled *Heads* from a scenario by G. F. Dalton.

One of the original members of the Cambridge University Cinema Society, who has made a serious study of film technique, has started a new service for the benefit of those who have ideas for film scenarios but lack the experience or the time for putting them into shape. His agency is known as the Regent Literary Service.

Charles Hamner, the former miner and producer of *Black Diamonds*, is planning to start a studio at Barnsley for the production of films for children. These will be mainly fairy stories and pantomimes and will be acted by children.

A London group of the Independent Film-makers Association will shortly be formed, and an attempt is being made to form a similar group in Glasgow. Enquiries, in the first instance, should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, I.F.M.A.

The Meteor Film Producing Society, Glasgow, is one of the most energetic groups in the country. It has a well-equipped studio, and arranges lectures and exhibitions. At the Scottish Film Festival, which it recently organised, Victor Saville awarded first prize to one of the Society's own films, *All on a Summer's Day*. It hopes soon to make a number of short documentaries on 35 mm. The Hon. Secretary is Stanley L. Russell, 14 Kelvin Drive, Glasgow, N.W.

THE FILM ON PAPER
PLANNING THE PRODUCTION

STUART LEGG
Director of "The New Generation"

IN ANY production some sort of preliminary planning, however vague and inexact, is necessary. Otherwise a "few-shots-strung-together" interest picture of the type we pray to be delivered from is the inevitable result. The three stages of making a film—scenario, shooting, cutting—are each a selective process; so that the earlier a selective attitude is adopted, the greater will be the co-ordination of thought all through the making of the film. And, perhaps more important still, selection at the first (scenario) stage will lead straightway to the saving of time and *money*.

Pre-shooting paper work is a progressive choosing of "aspects." In choosing an aspect of general existence, you choose your subject. In choosing an aspect of that subject, you choose your *theme*. The theme is that particular aspect of the subject, and latent in it, which you are going to bring to the fore in your film. Its choice depends largely upon your personal feelings towards the subject. You may foster a purely scientific feeling for it; you may be concerned with the politics involved; you may be interested in a sociological aspect of it. But whatever your reaction to the subject, it is essential to choose a definite theme from it, for the theme is the *raison d'être* of the film. The theme is not necessarily a movie conception in itself; it appears in visual terms in the next stage of preparation—the treatment. But it must be a single, precise entity, and all other themes and bits of themes must be shelved. By sticking to one theme and one theme only, clarity of construction is ensured.

Next comes the problem of how to handle the real-life material from which the film is going to be made. This is solved in the process of writing the treatment. With the theme already chosen, the method of treatment is, to a certain extent, determined. If your theme is scientific, you will be most concerned with some concrete product of the subject, ways and means of obtaining it, and its place in the general economic scale. If political, you will be occupied with the attitude of the people of the subject towards each other and towards their work. If sociological, you will be interested in bringing alive the people themselves and their actual relationships to each other and to the subject. And so on. So you will tend to construct

your film expositionally, symphonically, lyrically, or by any other method, according to the aspect of the subject you have chosen for the theme. These methods are by no means mutually exclusive; each is used where and when it is wanted, according to the requirements of the theme. The writing of the treatment is another selective process. The main work in it is the seeking out of those visual aspects of the available material which best express the theme. You will probably concern yourself first with the "chunks" of the material which will go to form the sequences of the film. There may be many such chunks available for shooting. But which of them are relevant to, and best bear out the theme? Which of them readily lend themselves to movie construction? Then, when the chunks are selected, in what order are they to be used, to give the best form to the finished film? These considerations must be carefully weighed, and the chunks selected and ordered into the sequences of the film. Next, you will take each chunk separately and analyse what goes on inside them. These analyses, when built up into visual terms, will form the shots and combinations of shots within each sequence. In determining how to treat the material in each chunk, don't merely look to surface appearances, or you will get a smooth, easy, meatless tale. Surface exposition and surface drama may be well and useful in its place, but it is not the business of films to record the obvious. Look behind the surface for drama more closely allied to the essence of the chunk you are interpreting; the use of latent dramatic references brings more power to the film because of their closer intimacy to the material. Take, for instance, a telephone exchange; there is drama, obvious drama, in the fact that the exchange is the hub of the city's communications. But go closer, and you will hear the separate voices of the city, each deep in its own affairs, each telling a story of its own. And from these isolated stories you can cross-section the life of the city, the drama of commerce, of industry, of homes. Perhaps the best way of going about this analysis is to catalogue systematically all relevant observations, and to start lines of co-ordinative thought from spontaneous details of people and things. These details often give valuable clues to the best way of treating each chunk of material.

Direct observation leads to the consideration of two elements in any given happening or event: *what* and *who*. First, consider the *what*. Look not only for what is happening, but also for the attendant circumstances of the event, which will orientate it and stamp it as that particular event and no other. For example, a big business man dictating in his office: perhaps the attendant circumstances which best stamp the scene as "big business" are the beflagged map on the wall behind the man, and the imperious buzzer on his desk.

Look further for the pace of what is happening, for pace is the factor leading to drama. The slow, measured, to-and-fro walk of the business man as he dictates is an essential element in his scene. Second, consider the *who*. Look not only for who is concerned in the happening, but for the attendant circumstances of the *who*, which will orientate and stamp the person in relation to the event. For instance, in *Voice of the World* Elton showed the turning on of power in the power-house to bring electricity to the factory. The electrician by whom this was done had only one eye. So Elton told us something more about that man than that he was merely an electrician. Look then for the significance of the person in regard to the event, how he or she is bound up with it. In the same sequence of *Voice of the World* the steady, confident arm movement of the electrician related him instantly to the machinery of which he had charge. Then, the combination of these two elements of a given event, the what and the who, the welding of them together into a whole, will bring co-ordination to the event and will lead to poetry, imagery, ceremony—that is, it will give a spiritual reference to an ordinary happening.

Having analysed the material available for shooting, and extracted from it all those aspects which have bearing on the proposed interpretation, it is now necessary to build up *visually* all these parts into their place in the treatment. Literary conceptions and literary embellishments must be conspicuous by their absence. This is not a didactic convention: it is a practical necessity. Literary ideas invariably make bad movie, and in many cases are utterly impossible to shoot. Every descriptive word of a good treatment adds a visual component to the whole. At this stage, questions of proportion in dealing with the material must be settled. Which of the previously selected chunks are most important in relation to the theme? These are the ones to receive more exhaustive attention, greater elaboration, and possibly greater length. Others, less meaty, must take second place. Others again, though visually pleasant, may have to be excluded altogether, since they do not sufficiently assist the theme. The position of *tempo* changes must also be determined; that is, the points where dramatisation of material will begin. Points where one form of construction will emerge from another must be considered; what sections will be purely explanative, what sections will be shot in such a way as to allow the material and its inferences to dominate over the general theme. Points for special emphasis in shooting or cutting must be fixed. So, with the theme selected from the subject, the treatment from the theme, and the methods of interpretation from the relevant aspects of the material itself, the shooting-script—the blue-print shot-by-shot plan of the film—can be written.

In the shooting-script you will begin to consider how the photo-

graphic apparatus at your disposal can help you to shape the material before you, how it can explain, elaborate, emphasize and strengthen—in fact, how the camera and its accessories can turn actual fact into movie shape. But don't be too confident of the finished shooting-script. Very few can resist the temptation of hacking it about during the shooting to include some new development which suddenly presents itself. And a new spontaneity may often be gained by doing this. As long as the main lines of the treatment are rigidly adhered to, and irrelevant prettinesses religiously eschewed—the shooting-script can be respectfully forgotten.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CINEMA SOCIETY

An attempt to break away not only from sub-standard stock but also from the type of story which, we readily admit, can be more easily and more efficiently turned out by the trade, has been made by the Cambridge University Cinema Society in its recent production *Power*, which is being distributed by Zenifilms.

Although many people have much spare time at Cambridge, the spare time of different people does not often coincide; and therefore it is difficult to get a large unit together for any length of time. Documentary is the ideal material for a university film society. Contrary to popular belief, there are many young men in Cambridge who will work like niggers, at work both manual and secretarial. There are also the young men with ideas, so often heard of; and these ideas are given coherent form by means of lectures and practical film work. As for material, Cambridge can provide anything from the most modern laboratories to the most ancient buildings and a beautiful country-side.

The subject of *Power* presents great possibilities. Had time allowed, it would have been made a two-reeler. It is actually a one-reeler; but the subject has not been skimped, and the film flows easily from the first efforts of man to harness the winds and the waters, to the most modern developments of steam and electrical power.

The film was directed by Gordon Taylor. It was written by him in conjunction with Maurice Harvey, who is now directing *Pygmalion* for the society, which he also wrote.

Also under production at present is a film of the building of the vast new library at Cambridge, for which half the cost, £500,000, was given by the Rockefeller Trust. The director is Roger Colville-Wallis; on the camera are P. L. Mollison and C. D. Pegge, (the author of *Bombay Riots*).

David Watson.

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Editor: NORMAN WILSON
Review Editor: FORSYTH HARDY

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